

MEMOIRS AND ESSAYS

ON

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS;

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MEMOIR

OF

JOHN WOOLMAN,

CHIEFLY EXTRACTED FROM A

JOURNAL OF HIS LIFE AND TRAVELS.



PHILADELPHIA :

**PUBLISHED BY THE TRACT-ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS,
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No. 1.

MEMOIR, &c.

JOHN WOOLMAN, the subject of this memoir, was a member of the society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, in North America. He was a bright example of purity and lowliness of heart, a preacher of the righteousness which is of faith, and one of those who laboured most early and earnestly, to open the eyes of mankind to the complicated injustice and cruelty of negro slavery, as well as of the trade which supplies its victims. To those who love mercy, and who have rejoiced in the removal, thus far, of that deep reproach to Christianity, it may be interesting to trace the progressive formation of the character of this advocate for mercy, and having contemplated some of his opinions and acts in life, to view him in its humble and peaceful close.

His account of himself opens thus: "I have often felt a motion of love to leave some hints in writing of my experience of the goodness of God; and now, in the thirty-sixth year of my age, I begin this work.

"I was born in Northampton, in Burlington county, West Jersey, in the year 1720; and before I was seven years old I began to be acquainted with the operations of divine love. Through the care of my parents, I was taught to read nearly as soon as I was capable of it; and, as I went from school one seventh-day, I remember, while my companions went to play by the way, I went forward out of sight, and, sitting down, I read the 22nd chapter of the Revelations: "He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, &c." and, in reading it, my mind was drawn to seek after that pure habitation, which, I then believed, God had prepared for his servants. The place where I sat, and the sweetness that attended my mind, remain fresh in my memory.

This, and the like gracious visitations, had that effect upon me, that when boys used ill language it troubled me; and, through the continued mercies of God, I was preserved from it.

The pious instructions of my parents were often fresh in my mind when I happened to be among wicked children, and were of use to me. My parents, having a large family of children, used frequently on first-days after meeting, to put us to read in the holy Scriptures, or some religious books, one after another, the rest sitting by without much conversation; which, I have since often thought, was a good practice. From what I had read and heard, I believed there had been, in past ages, people who walked in uprightness before God,

in a degree exceeding any that I knew, or heard of, now living: and the apprehension of there being less steadiness and firmness, amongst people in this age than in past ages, often troubled me while I was a child.

A thing remarkable in my childhood was, that once, going to a neighbour's house, I saw, on the way, a robin sitting on her nest, and as I came near, she went off, but, having young ones, flew about, and, with many cries, expressed her concern for them. I stood and threw stones at her, till, one striking her, she fell down dead. At first I was pleased with the exploit, but after a few minutes was seized with horror, as having, in a sportive way, killed an innocent creature while she was careful for her young. I beheld her lying dead, and thought these young ones, for which she was so careful, must now perish for want of their dam to nourish them; and, after some painful considerations on the subject, I climbed up the tree, took all the young birds, and killed them; supposing that better than to leave them to pine away and die miserably: and believed, in this case, that scripture-proverb was fulfilled, 'The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.' I then went on my errand, but, for some hours could think of little else but the cruelties I had committed, and was much troubled. Thus He, whose tender mercies are over all his works, hath placed a principle in the human mind, which incites to exercise goodness towards every living creature; and this being singly attended to, people become tender-hearted and sympathising: but being frequently and totally rejected, the mind becomes shut up in a contrary disposition.

About the twelfth year of my age, my father being abroad, my mother reprov'd me for some misconduct, to which I made an undutiful reply; and, the next first-day, as I was with my father returning from meeting, he told me he understood I had behaved amiss to my mother, and advised me to be more careful in future. I knew myself blameable, and in shame and confusion remained silent. Being thus awakened to a sense of my wickedness, I felt remorse in my mind, and getting home, I retired and prayed to the Lord to forgive me; and do not remember that I ever, after that, spoke unhand-somely to either of my parents, however foolish in some other things.

Having attained the age of sixteen years, I began to love wanton company; and though I was preserved from profane language, or scandalous conduct, still I perceived a plant in me which produced much wild grapes; yet my merciful Father forsook me not utterly, but, at times, through his grace, I was brought seriously to consider my ways; and the sight of my back-slidings affected me with sorrow; but, for want

of rightly attending to the reproofs of instruction, vanity was added to vanity, and repentance to repentance. Upon the whole, my mind was more and more alienated from the truth, and I hastened toward destruction. While I meditate on the gulf towards which I travelled, and reflect on my youthful disobedience, for these things I weep, mine eye runneth down with water.

Advancing in age, the number of my acquaintances increased, and thereby my way grew more difficult; though I had found comfort in reading the holy Scriptures, and thinking on heavenly things, I was now estranged therefrom: I knew I was going from the flock of Christ, and had no resolution to return; hence serious reflections were uneasy to me, and youthful vanities and diversions my greatest pleasure. Running in this road I found many like myself; and we associated in that which is the reverse of true friendship.

But in this swift race it pleased God to visit me with sickness, so that I doubted of recovering; and then did darkness, horror, and amazement, with full force, seize me, even when my pain and distress of body was very great. I thought it would have been better for me never to have had a being, than to see the day which I now saw. I was filled with confusion; and in great affliction both of mind and body, I lay and bewailed myself. I had not confidence to lift up my cries to God, whom I had thus offended; but, in a deep sense of my great folly, I was humbled before him; and, at length, that Word which is as a fire and a hammer, broke and dissolved my rebellious heart, and then my cries were put up in contrition; and in the multitude of his mercies I found inward relief, and felt a close engagement, that if he was pleased to restore my health, I might walk humbly before him.

After my recovery, this exercise remained with me a considerable time; but, by degrees, giving way to youthful vanities, they gained strength, and, getting with wanton young people, I lost ground. The Lord had been very gracious, and spoke peace to me in the time of my distress; and I now most ungratefully turned again to folly; on which account, at times, I felt sharp reproof. I was not so hardy as to commit things scandalous; but to exceed in vanity, and promote mirth, was my chief study. Still I retained a love for pious people, and their company brought an awe upon me. My dear parents, several times, admonished me in the fear of the Lord, and their admonition entered into my heart, and had a good effect for a season; but, not getting deep enough to pray rightly, the tempter, when he came, found entrance. I remember once, having spent a part of the day in wantonness, as I went to bed at night, there lay in a window, near my bed, a bible,

which I opened, and first cast my eye on this text, 'We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covers us.' This I knew to be my case; and, meeting with so unexpected a reproof, I was somewhat affected with it, and went to bed under remorse of conscience: which I soon cast off again.

Thus time past on: My heart was replenished with mirth and wantonness, and pleasing scenes of vanity were presented to my imagination, till I attained the age of eighteen years; near which time I felt the judgments of God, in my soul, like a consuming fire; and, looking over my past life, the prospect was moving.—I was often sad, and longed to be delivered from those vanities; then again, my heart was strongly inclined to them, and there was in me a sore conflict: At times I turned to folly, and then again, sorrow and confusion took hold of me. In a while, I resolved totally to leave off some of my vanities; but there was a secret reserve in my heart, of the more refined part of them, and I was not low enough to find true peace. Thus, for some months, I had great troubles; there remaining in me an unsubjected will, which rendered my labours fruitless, till at length, through the merciful continuance of heavenly visitations, I was made to bow down in spirit before the Lord. I remember one evening I had spent some time in reading a pious author; and walking out alone, I humbly prayed to the Lord for his help, that I might be delivered from all those vanities which so insnared me. Thus, being brought low, he helped me; and, as I learned to bear the cross, I felt refreshment to come from his presence; but, not keeping in that strength which gave victory, I lost ground again; the sense of which greatly affected me; and I sought deserts and lonely places, and there, with tears, did confess my sins to God, and humbly craved help of him. And I may say with reverence, he was near to me in my troubles, and in those times of humiliation opened my ear to discipline. I was now led to look seriously at the means by which I was drawn from the pure truth, and learned this, that if I would live in the life which the faithful servants of God lived in, I must not go into company as heretofore in my own will; but all the cravings of sense must be governed by a divine principle. In times of sorrow and abasement these instructions were sealed upon me, and I felt the power of Christ prevail over selfish desires, so that I was preserved in a good degree of steadiness; and being young, and believing at that time that a single life was best for me, I was strengthened to keep from such company as had often been a snare to me.

I kept steadily to meetings; spent first-day afternoons chiefly in reading the Scriptures and other good books; and was

early convinced in mind, that true religion consisted in an inward life, wherein the heart doth love and reverence God the Creator, and learns to exercise true justice and goodness, not only toward all men, but also toward the brute creatures.—That as the mind was moved, by an inward principle, to love God as an invisible, incomprehensible Being, by the same principle it was moved to love him in all his manifestations in the visible world.—That, as by his breath the flame of life was kindled in all animal sensible creatures, to say we love God, and, at the same time exercise cruelty towards the least creature, is a contradiction in itself.

I found no narrowness respecting sects and opinions; but believed, that sincere upright-hearted people, in every society, who truly love God, were accepted of him.

All this time I lived with my parents, and wrought on the plantation; and, having had schooling pretty well for a planter, I used to improve it in winter evenings, and other leisure times; and, being now in the twenty-first year of my age, a man, in much business at shopkeeping and baking, asked me, if I would hire with him to tend shop and keep books. I acquainted my father with the proposal; and, after some deliberation, it was agreed for me to go.

At home I had lived retired; and now, having a prospect of being much in the way of company, I felt frequent and fervent cries in my heart to God, the Father of mercies, that he would preserve me from all corruption; that in this more public employment, I might serve him, my gracious Redeemer, in that humility and self-denial, with which I had been, in a small degree, exercised in a more private life. The man, who employed me, furnished a shop in Mount-Holly, about five miles from my father's house, and six from his own; and there I lived alone, and tended his shop. Shortly after my settlement here, I was visited by several young people, my former acquaintance, who knew not but vanities would be as agreeable to me now as ever; and, at these times, I cried to the Lord in secret, for wisdom and strength; for I felt myself encompassed with difficulties, and had fresh occasion to bewail the follies of time past, in contracting a familiarity with libertine people; and, as I had now left my father's house outwardly, I found my heavenly Father to be merciful to me beyond what I can express.

After a while, my former acquaintance gave over expecting me as one of their company; and I began to be known to some whose conversation was helpful to me: And now, as I had experienced the love of God through Jesus Christ, to redeem me from many pollutions, and to be a succour to me through a sea of conflicts, with which no person was fully

acquainted ; and as my heart was often enlarged in this heavenly principle, I felt a tender compassion for the youth, who remained entangled in snares, like those which had entangled me from one time to another. This love and tenderness increased ; and my mind was more strongly engaged for the good of my fellow-creatures. I went to meetings in an awful frame of mind, and endeavoured to be inwardly acquainted with the language of the true Shepherd ; and, one day, being under a strong exercise of spirit, I stood up, and said some words in a meeting ; but not keeping close to the divine opening, I said more than was required of me ; and being soon sensible of my error, I was afflicted in mind some weeks, without any light or comfort, even to that degree that I could not take satisfaction in any thing : I remembered God, and was troubled, and, in the depth of my distress, he had pity upon me, and sent the Comforter. I then felt forgiveness for my offence, and my mind became calm and quiet, being truly thankful to my gracious Redeemer for his mercies ; and, after this, feeling the spring of divine love opened, and a concern to speak, I said a few words in a meeting, in which I found peace ; this, I believe, was about six weeks from the first time. And, as I was thus humbled and disciplined under the cross, my understanding became more strengthened to distinguish the pure Spirit which inwardly moves upon the heart, and taught me to wait in silence sometimes many weeks together, until I felt that rise which prepares the creature to stand like a trumpet, through which the Lord speaks to his flock.

From an inward purifying, and steadfast abiding under it, springs a lively operative desire for the good of others. All the faithful are not called to the public ministry ; but whoever are, are called to minister of that which they have tasted and handled spiritually. The outward modes of worship are various ; but, wherever any are true ministers of Jesus Christ, it is from the operation of his Spirit upon their hearts, first purifying them, and thus giving them a just sense of the conditions of others.

This truth was early fixed in my mind ; and I was taught to watch the pure opening, and to take heed, lest, while I was standing to speak, my own will should get uppermost, and cause me to utter words from worldly wisdom, and depart from the channel of the true gospel ministry.

In the management of my outward affairs, I may say, with thankfulness, I found truth to be my support, and I was respected in my master's family, who came to live in Mount-Holly within two years after my going there.

About the twenty-third year of my age, I had many fresh and heavenly openings, in respect to the care and providence

of the Almighty, over his creatures in general, and over man as the most noble amongst those which are visible. And being clearly convinced in my judgment, that to place my whole trust in God was best for me, I felt renewed engagements, that in all things I might act on an inward principle of virtue, and pursue worldly business no further, than as truth opened my way therein.

My employer having a negro woman, sold her, and desired me to write a bill of sale, the man being waiting, who bought her. The thing was sudden; and, though the thoughts of writing an instrument of slavery for one of my fellow-creatures felt uneasy, yet I remembered I was hired by the year, that it was my master who directed me to do it, and that it was an elderly man, a member of our society, who bought her; so, through weakness, I gave way, and wrote it; but, at the executing it, I was so afflicted in my mind, that I said, before my master and the friend, that I believed slave-keeping to be a practice inconsistent with the Christian religion. This in some degree abated my uneasiness; yet, as often as I reflected seriously upon it, I thought I should have been clearer, if I had desired to have been excused from it, as a thing against my conscience; for such it was. And, some time after this, a young man, of our society, spoke to me to write a conveyance of a slave to him, he having lately taken a negro into his house; I told him I was not easy to write it; for, though many of our meeting and in other places, kept slaves, I still believed the practice was not right, and desired to be excused from the writing. I spoke to him in good-will; and he told me that keeping slaves was not altogether agreeable to his mind; but that the slave being a gift to his wife, he had accepted of her."

By this time John Woolman had begun to travel occasionally in the exercise of his gift as a minister, and in his account of one of these journeys, performed in company with a friend, we meet with the following remarks:

"We left our province on the 12th day of the 3d month, in the year 1746, and had several meetings in the upper part of Chester county, and near Lancaster; in some of which, the love of Christ prevailed, uniting us together in his service. Then we crossed the river Susquehannah, and had several meetings in a new settlement, called the Red-lands; the oldest of which, as I was informed, did not exceed ten years. It is the poorer sort of people that commonly begin to improve remote deserts. With a small stock, they have houses to build, lands to clear and fence, corn to raise, clothes to provide, and children to educate; that Friends, who visit such, may well sympathise with them in their hardships in the wilderness;

and though the best entertainment such can give may seem coarse to some, who are used to cities or old-settled places, it becomes the disciples of Christ to be content with it. Our hearts were sometimes enlarged in the love of our heavenly Father amongst those people; and the sweet influence of his Spirit supported us through some difficulties: To him be the praise!—

Two things were remarkable to me in this journey; first, in regard to my entertainment, when I ate, drank, and lodged at free-cost, with people who lived in ease on the hard labour of their slaves, I felt uneasy; and, as my mind was inward to the Lord, I found, from place to place, this uneasiness return upon me, at times, through the whole visit. Where the masters bore a good share of the burthen, and lived frugally, so that their servants were well provided for, and their labour moderate, I felt more easy; but where they lived in a costly way, and laid heavy burthens on their slaves, my exercise was often great, and I frequently had conversation with them, in private, concerning it. Secondly; this trade of importing slaves from their native country being much encouraged amongst them, and the white people and their children so generally living without much labour, was frequently the subject of my serious thoughts: and I saw in these southern provinces so many vices and corruptions, increased by this trade and this way of life, that it appeared to me as a gloom over the land; and though now many willingly run into it, yet, in future, the consequence will be grievous to posterity: I express it as it hath appeared to me, not at once nor twice, but as a matter fixed on my mind.”

Again, in 1753, he relates thus:

“About this time, a person at some distance lying sick, his brother came to me to write his will: I knew he had slaves; and, asking his brother, was told he intended to leave them as slaves to his children. As writing is a profitable employ, and as offending sober people was disagreeable to my inclination, I was straitened in my mind; but, as I looked to the Lord, he inclined my heart to his testimony; and I told the man that I believed the practice of continuing slavery to this people was not right, and had a scruple in my mind against doing writings of that kind; that, though many in our society kept them as slaves, still I was not easy to be concerned in it; and desired to be excused from going to write the will. I spake to him in the fear of the Lord; and he made no reply to what I said, but went away; he, also, had some concern in the practice; and I thought he was displeased with me. In this case I had a fresh confirmation, that acting contrary to present outward interest, from a motive of

divine love, and in regard to truth and righteousness, opens the way to a treasure better than silver, and to a friendship exceeding the friendship of men."

On some subsequent occasions, his judgment had sufficient weight to procure freedom for those negroes, who were the subjects of it.

"Scrupling to do writings relative to keeping slaves, having been the means of sundry small trials to me, in which I have so evidently felt my own will set aside, I think it good to mention a few of them. Tradesmen and retailers of goods, who depend on their business for a living, are naturally inclined to keep the good will of their customers; nor is it a pleasant thing for young men to be under any necessity to question the judgment or honesty of elderly men, and more especially of such as have a fair reputation. Deep-rooted customs, though wrong, are not easily altered, but it is the duty of every one to be firm in that which they certainly know to be right for them. A charitable, benevolent man, well acquainted with a negro, may, I believe, under some circumstances, keep him in his family as a servant, from no other motive than the negro's good; but man, as man, knows not what shall be after him, nor hath he any assurance that his children will attain to that perfection in wisdom and goodness, necessary rightly to exercise such power: hence it is clear to me, that I ought not to be the scribe where wills are drawn, in which some children are made absolute masters over others during life.

"About this time, 1755, an ancient man, of good esteem in the neighbourhood, came to my house to get his will written. He had young negroes; and I asked him privately, how he proposed to dispose of them: he told me: I then said, I cannot write thy will without breaking my own peace; and respectfully gave him my reasons for it. He signified that he had a choice that I should have written it; but as I could not, consistently with my conscience, he did not desire it; and so he got it written by some other person. And, a few years after, there being great alterations in his family, he came again to get me to write his will: his negroes were yet young, and his son, to whom he intended to give them, was, since he first spoke to me, from a libertine become a sober young man; and he supposed that I would have been free, on that account, to write it. We had much friendly talk on the subject, and then deferred it: a few days after, he came again, and directed their freedom; and so I wrote his will.

Near the time the last-mentioned friend first spoke to me, a neighbour received a bad bruise in his body, and sent for me to bleed him, which being done, he desired me to write

his will. I took notes; and amongst other things, he told me to which of his children he gave his young negro. I considered the pain and distress he was in, and knew not how it would end; so I wrote his will, save only that part concerning his slave, and carrying it to his bed-side, read it to him, and then told him, in a friendly way, that I could not write any instruments by which my fellow-creatures were made slaves, without bringing trouble on my mind: I let him know that I charged nothing for what I had done; and desired to be excused from doing the other part in the way he proposed. We then had a serious conference on the subject; at length he agreeing to set her free, I finished his will."

Nor were his endeavours in this cause, limited to private or public conference. He wrote some "Considerations on keeping negroes," which being approved by his friends, were printed at the expense of the Society, and distributed among its members. This pamphlet he followed up by a second part on the same subject: and in many subsequent journeys, and opportunities which their meetings for discipline principally afforded him, he continued to bear his testimony against this oppression, and to exert an increasing influence on the minds of his fellow-professors.

The following reflections, written in 1757, while he was travelling on a religious account, among slave-holders, are forcibly descriptive of the views and feelings under which he was accustomed to reason on such occasions:

"From the time of my entering Maryland, I have been much under sorrow, which of late so increased upon me, that my mind was almost overwhelmed; and I may say with the Psalmist, "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God," who, in infinite goodness, looked upon my affliction, and in my private retirement, sent the Comforter for my relief; for which I humbly bless his holy name. The sense I had of the state of the churches brought a weight of distress upon me. The gold to me appeared dim, and the fine gold changed;* and though this is the case too generally, yet the sense of it in these parts hath in a particular manner borne heavy upon me. It appeared to me, that through the prevailing of the spirit of this world, the minds of many were brought to an inward desolation; and instead of the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and heavenly wisdom, which are the necessary companions of the true sheep of Christ, a spirit of fierceness and the love of dominion too generally prevailed. From small beginnings in errors, great buildings by degrees are raised; and from one age to another are more and more strengthen

ed by the general concurrence of the people: and as men obtain reputation by their profession of the truth, their virtues are mentioned as arguments in favour of general error; and those of less note, to justify themselves, say* that such and such good men did the like. By what other steps could the people of Judah arise to that height of wickedness, as to give just ground for the prophet Isaiah to declare in the name of the Lord, "None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth," or for the Almighty to call upon the great city of Jerusalem, just before the Babylonish captivity, "If ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth,—I will pardon it." The prospect of a road lying open to the same degeneracy, in some parts of this newly settled land of America, in respect to our conduct towards the negroes, hath deeply bowed my mind in this journey: and though, to relate briefly how these people are treated, is no agreeable work, yet, after often reading over the notes I made as I travelled, I find my mind engaged to preserve them.

Many of the white people in those provinces take little or no care of negro marriages; and when negroes marry after their own way, some make so little account of those marriages, that, with views of outward interest, they often part men from their wives, by selling them far asunder; which is common when estates are sold by executors at vendue. Many, whose labour is heavy, being followed at their business in the field by a man with a whip, hired for that purpose, have in common little else allowed but one peck of Indian corn, and some salt, for one week, with a few potatoes. (The potatoes they commonly raise by their labour on the first day of the week.) The correction ensuing on their disobedience to overseers, or slothfulness in business, is often very severe, and sometimes desperate. Men and women have many times scarce clothes enough to hide their nakedness; and boys and girls, ten and twelve years old, are often quite naked amongst their master's children. Some use endeavours to instruct those (negro children) they have in reading; but in common this is not only neglected, but disapproved.

These are the people by whose labour the other inhabitants are in a great measure supported, and many of them in the luxuries of life,—these are the people who have made no agreement to serve us, and who have not forfeited their liberty that we know of—these are the souls for whom Christ died!—and for our conduct towards them *we* must answer, before Him who is no respecter of persons. They who know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent, and are thus acquainted with the merciful, benevolent, Gospel spirit, will therein perceive that the indignation of God is

kindled against oppression and cruelty; and in beholding the great distress of so numerous a people, will find cause for mourning!"

The Society of Friends, it is well known, cleared their own hands of the practice of slavery, and ultimately came forward in a body to act as its determined and strenuous opposers. Let us now return to the views of John Woolman on some other subjects.

"Until this year, 1756, I continued to retail goods, besides following my trade as a tailor; about which time, I grew uneasy on account of my business growing too cumbersome: I had begun with selling trimmings for garments, and from thence proceeded to sell cloths and linens; and, at length, having got a considerable shop of goods, my trade increased every year, and the road to large business appeared open; but I felt a stop in my mind.

Through the mercies of the Almighty, I had, in a good degree, learned to be content with a plain way of living: I had but a small family; and, on serious consideration, I believed truth did not require me to engage much in cumbering affairs. It had been my general practice to buy and sell things really useful: things that served chiefly to please the vain mind in people, I was not easy to trade in; seldom did it; and, whenever I did, I found it weaken me as a Christian.

The increase of business became my burthen; for, though my natural inclination was toward merchandise, yet I believed truth required me to live more free from outward cumber: and there was now a strife in my mind between the two; and in this exercise my prayers were put up to the Lord, who graciously heard me, and gave me a heart resigned to his holy will. Then I lessened my outward business; and, as I had opportunity, told my customers of my intention, that they might consider what shop to turn to, and, in a while, wholly laid down merchandise, following my trade, as a tailor, myself only, having no apprentice. I also had a nursery of apple trees; in which I employed some of my time in hoeing, grafting, trimming, and inoculating. In merchandise it is the custom, where I lived, to sell chiefly on credit, and poor people often get in debt; and when payment is expected, not having wherewith to pay, their creditors often sue for it at law. Having often observed occurrences of this kind, I found it good for me to advise poor people to take such goods as were most useful and not costly.

In the time of trading, I had an opportunity of seeing, that the too liberal use of spirituous liquors, and the custom of wearing too costly apparel, led some people into great inconveniences; and these two things appeared to be often con-

nected; for, by not attending to that use of things which is consistent with universal righteousness, there is an increase of labour which extends beyond what our Heavenly Father intends for us: and by great labour, and often by much sweating, there is, even among such as are not drunkards, a craving of some liquors to revive the spirits; that, partly by the luxurious drinking of some, and partly by the drinking of others, led to it through immoderate labour, very great quantities of rum are every year expended in our colonies; the greater part of which we should have no need of, did we steadily attend to pure wisdom.

Where men take pleasure in feeling their minds elevated by strong drink, and so indulge their appetite as to disorder their understandings, neglect their duty as members in a family or civil society, and cast off all regard to religion, their case is much to be pitied; and where such, whose lives are for the most part regular, and whose examples have a strong influence on the minds of others, adhere to some customs which powerfully draw to the use of more strong liquor than pure wisdom allows; this also, as it hinders the spreading of the spirit of meekness, and strengthens the hands of the more excessive drinkers, is a case to be lamented.

As every degree of luxury hath some connection with evil, those who profess to be disciples of Christ, and are looked upon as leaders of the people, should have that mind in them which was also in Christ, and so stand separate from every wrong way, as a means of help to the weaker. As I have sometimes been much spent in the heat, and taken spirits to revive me, I have found by experience, that in such circumstances the mind is not so calm, nor so fitly disposed for divine meditation, as when all such extremes are avoided; and I have felt an increasing care to attend to that holy Spirit which sets bounds to our desires, and leads those, who faithfully follow it, to apply all the gifts of Divine providence to the purposes for which they were intended. Did such as have the care of great estates, attend with singleness of heart to this heavenly instructor, which so opens and enlarges the mind, that men love their neighbours as themselves; they would have wisdom given them to manage, without finding occasion to employ some people in the luxuries of life, or to make it necessary for others to labour too hard; but, for want of steadily regarding this principle of divine love, a selfish spirit takes place in the minds of people, which is attended with darkness and manifold confusion in the world."

"In the fall of this year, (1764) having hired a man, to work, I perceived in conversation that he had been a soldier in the late war on this continent; and in the evening, giving a nar-

ration of his captivity among the Indians, he informed me that he saw two of his fellow captives tortured to death in a very cruel manner.

This relation affected me with sadness, under which I went to bed; and the next morning, soon after I awoke, a fresh and living sense of Divine love was spread over my mind; in which I had a renewed prospect of the nature of that wisdom from above, which leads to a right use of all gifts, both spiritual and temporal, and gives content therein: under a feeling thereof, I wrote as follows:

Hath He, who gave me a being attended with many wants unknown to the brute creatures, given me a capacity superior to theirs; and shown me, that a moderate application to business is proper to my present condition; and that this, attended with his blessing, may supply all outward wants, while they remain within the bounds he hath fixed; and no imaginary wants, proceeding from an evil spirit, have any place in me? Attend, then, O my soul! to this pure wisdom, as thy sure conductor through the manifold dangers of the world.

Doth pride lead to vanity? Doth vanity form imaginary wants? Do these wants prompt men to exert their power in requiring that of others, which they themselves would rather be excused from, were the same required of them? Do these proceedings beget hard thoughts? Do hard thoughts when ripe, become malice? Does malice, when ripe, become revengeful; and in the end, do men inflict terrible pains on their fellow-creatures, and spread desolation in the world?

Do mankind, walking in uprightness, delight in each other's happiness? And do these creatures, capable of this attainment, by giving way to an evil spirit, employ their wit and strength to afflict and destroy one another? Remember, then, O my soul! the quietude of those in whom Christ governs, and in all thy proceedings feel after it.

Doth he condescend to bless thee with his presence; to move and influence to action; to dwell in thee, and walk in thee? Remember then thy station, as a being sacred to God; accept of the strength freely offered thee; and take heed that no weakness, in conforming to expensive, unwise, and hard-hearted customs, gendering to discord and strife, be given way to. Doth he claim my body as his Temple, and graciously grant that I may be sacred to him? O! that I may prize this favour; and that my whole life may be conformable to this character?"

In the year 1763, John Woolman made a journey with considerable inconvenience and danger, to visit, in the love of the gospel, the Indian natives at Wehaloosing, a settlement on the Susquehannah, two hundred miles from Philadelphia,

where at that time they were religiously disposed. In one of the religious opportunities with them, feeling his mind covered with the spirit of prayer, he told the interpreters that he found it in his heart to pray to God, and was willing for them to omit interpreting.—Before they dispersed, he observed one of the Indians speaking to an interpreter, and was afterwards told, that he said in substance, “I love to feel where words come from.” After a subsequent meeting, which was held in the evening, Papunehang, the Indian above alluded to, having gone to bed, our friend heard him speak for a moment or two with a harmonious voice, and asking the interpreter, was told that “he was expressing his thankfulness to God, for the favours he had received that day, and prayed that he would continue to favour him with the same which he had experienced in that meeting.” An evidence that the visitations of heavenly love are not dependent upon circumstance, or place, nor confined to nation or colour, but are in the wisdom and goodness of God extended to all, in order that we may be brought into fellowship with him, and with his son Jesus Christ. He was preserved to return in safety to his family: and has left in his journal an interesting account of his proceedings. After other travels on the continent of America, and a continuance of patient labour in the cause of universal truth and justice, he came in 1772, with the approbation of his friends, to pay a religious visit to the Society in the northern part of England. Here the great Master, whom he had endeavoured faithfully to serve, was pleased to call him,* as it appears, with his loins girded about, and his light burning, to his everlasting reward.

The circumstances of his end may be suitably introduced by some reflections, which he wrote shortly before it, on his state and proceedings as a minister of the gospel.

“On this visit to England I have felt some instructions sealed on my mind, which I am concerned to leave in writing, for the use of such as are called to the station of a minister of Christ. Christ being the Prince of Peace, and we being no more than ministers, I find it necessary for us, not only to feel a concern in our first going forth, but to experience the renewings thereof, in the appointment of meetings.

I felt a concern, in America, to prepare for this voyage; and being, through the mercy of God, brought safe here, my heart was like a vessel that wanted vent; and, for several weeks, at first, when my mouth was opened in meetings, it often felt like the raising of a gate in a water-course, where a weight of water lay upon it; and in these labours there ap

peared a fresh visitation to many, especially the youth; but sometimes, after this, I felt empty and poor, and yet felt a necessity to appoint meetings. In this state I was exercised to abide in the pure life of truth; and, in all my labours, to watch diligently against the motions of self in my own mind.

I have frequently felt a necessity to stand up, when the spring of the ministry was low; and to speak from the necessity, in that which subjecteth the will of the creature; and herein I was united with the suffering seed, and found inward sweetness with these mortifying labours.

As I have been preserved in a watchful attention to the divine leader, under these dispensations, enlargement at times hath followed, and the power of truth hath risen higher, in some meetings, than I ever knew it before through me.

Thus I have been more and more instructed as to the necessity of depending, not upon a concern which I felt in America, to come on a visit to England, but upon the fresh instructions of Christ, the Prince of Peace, from day to day.

The gift is pure; and, while the eye is single in attending hereto, the understanding is preserved clear: self is kept out. We rejoice in filling up that which remains of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake, which is the Church.

The natural man loveth eloquence, and many love to hear eloquent orations; and if there is not a careful attention to the gift, men, who have once laboured in the pure gospel ministry; growing weary of suffering, and ashamed of appearing weak, may kindle a fire, compass themselves about with sparks, and walk in the light,* not of Christ, who is under suffering; but of that fire, which they going from the gift, have kindled; and that in hearers, which is gone from the meek, suffering state, into the worldly wisdom, may be warmed with this fire, and speak highly of these labours. That which is of God gathers to God; and that which is of the world is owned by the world.

In this journey a labour hath attended my mind, that the ministers amongst us may be preserved in the meek feeling life of truth, where we have no desire but to follow Christ, and be with him; that, when he is under suffering, we may suffer with him, and never desire to rise up in dominion, but as he, by the virtue of his own Spirit, may raise us."

A few days after writing these considerations, John Woolman in the course of his religious visits, came to the city of York, and was taken ill of the small-pox. The Friends, who

attended him, preserved minutes of the following expressions in the time of his sickness:

On First-day, the 27th of the ninth month, 1772, his disorder appeared to be the small-pox.

Second-day, he said he felt the disorder to affect his head, so that he could think little, and but as a child.

Third-day, he uttered the following prayer: "O Lord, my God! the amazing horrors of darkness were gathered around me, and covered me all over, and I saw no way to go forth; I felt the depth and extent of the misery of my fellow-creatures separated from the divine harmony, and it was heavier than I could bear, and I was crushed down under it; I lifted up my hand, I stretched out my arm, but there was none to help me; I looked round about and was amazed; in the depths of misery, O Lord! I remembered that thou art omnipotent, that I had called thee Father, and I felt that I loved thee, and I was made quiet in thy will, and I waited for deliverance from thee; thou hadst pity upon me when no man could help me: I saw that meekness under suffering was showed to us in the most affecting example of thy Son, and thou taughtest me to follow him, and I said,—Thy will, O Father! be done."

Fourth-day morning, being asked how he felt himself, he meekly answered, I do not know that I have slept this night, I feel the disorder making its progress, but my mind is mercifully preserved in stillness and peace. Some time after he said he was sensible the pains of death must be hard to bear; but, if he escaped them now, he must some time pass through them, and he did not know that he could be better prepared, but had no will in it. He said he had settled his outward affairs to his mind, had taken leave of his wife and family as never to return, leaving them to the Divine protection: adding, and though I feel them near to me at this time, yet I freely give them up, having a hope that they will be provided for. And a little after said, This trial is made easier than I could have thought, my will being wholly taken away; for if I were anxious for the event, it would have been harder; but I am not, and my mind enjoys a perfect calm.

In the night, a young woman having given him something to drink, he said, My child, thou seemest very kind to me, a poor creature, the Lord will reward thee for it. A while after he cried out with great earnestness of spirit, O my Father! my Father! and soon after he said, O my Father! my Father! how comfortable art thou to my soul in this trying season! Being asked if he would take a little nourishment, after some pause he replied, My child, I cannot tell what to say to it; I seem nearly arrived where my soul shall have rest from all its troubles.

After giving in something to be inserted in his journal, he said I believe the Lord will now excuse me from exercises of this kind; and I see no work but one, which is to be the last wrought by me in this world; the messenger will come that will release me from all these troubles; but it must be in the Lord's time, which I am waiting for. He said he had laboured to do whatever was required, according to the ability received, in the remembrance of which he had peace; and though the disorder was strong at times, and would, like a whirlwind, come over his mind, yet it had hitherto been kept steady, and centered in everlasting love; adding, and if that be mercifully continued, I ask or desire no more.

Fifth-day night, having repeatedly consented to take medicine with a view to settle his stomach, but without effect; the friend then waiting on him, said, through distress, What shall I do now! He answered with great composure, Rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks: but, added a little after, This is sometimes hard to come at.

Sixth-day morning, he broke forth early in supplication on this wise: O Lord! it was thy power that enabled me to forsake sin in my youth, and I have felt thy bruises for disobedience; but, as I bowed under them, thou didst heal me, continuing a father and a friend: I feel thy power now, and I beg that, in the approaching trying moment, thou wilt keep my heart steadfast unto thee.

Upon his giving directions to a friend concerning some little things, she said, I will take care, but hope thou wilt live to order them thyself. He replied, My hope is in Christ; and though I may seem a little better, a change in the disorder may soon happen, and my little strength be dissolved; and, if it so happen, I shall be gathered to my everlasting rest. On her saying she did not doubt that, but could not help mourning to see so many faithful servants removed at so low a time, he said, All good cometh from the Lord, whose power is the same, and who can work as he sees best. The same day he had given directions about wrapping his corpse, perceiving a friend to weep, he said, I would rather thou wouldst guard against weeping for me, my sister; I sorrow not, though I have had some painful conflicts: but now they seem over, and matters well settled, and I look at the face of my dear Redeemer; for sweet is his voice, and his countenance is comely.

First-day, fourth of tenth month, being very weak, and in general difficult to be understood, he uttered a few words in commemoration of the Lord's goodness, and added, How tenderly have I been waited on in this time of affliction! in which I may say, in Job's words, tedious days and wearisome nights are appointed unto me: And how many are spending their

time and money in vanity and superfluities; while thousands and tens of thousands want the necessities of life, who might be relieved by them, and their distresses, at such a time as this, in some degree softened, by administering suitable things.

Second-day morning, the apothecary, who appeared very anxious to assist him, being present, he queried about the probability of such a load of matter being thrown off his weak body; and the apothecary making some remarks, implying he thought it might, he spoke with an audible voice on this wise:—My dependence is on the Lord Jesus, who, I trust, will forgive my sins, which is all I hope for; and if it be his will to raise up this body again, I am content: and if to die, I am resigned; and, if thou canst not be easy without trying to assist nature, I submit. After which, his throat was so much affected, that it was very difficult for him to speak so as to be understood: and he frequently wrote when he wanted any thing. About the second hour, on fourth-day morning, he asked for pen and ink, and at several times, with much difficulty, wrote thus: "I believe my being here is in the wisdom of Christ; I know not as to life or death."

"About a quarter before six, the same morning, he seemed to fall into an easy sleep, which continued about half an hour; when, seeming to awake, he breathed a few times with more difficulty, and expired, without sigh, groan, or struggle.

ON
FAITHFULNESS
IN
LITTLE THINGS.

BY FENELON,
ARCHBISHOP OF CAMBRAY.

THE opportunities for displaying great deeds of goodness are rare, and when they do present themselves, there are many powerful stimulus to kindle magnanimity and perseverance. But the little occasions to stand firm in the cause of truth come upon us inadvertently; and almost every moment they render it necessary for us, without ceasing, to maintain a warfare against pride, slothfulness, and a domineering lordly disposition; against precipitancy, impatience, &c. opposing our corrupt wills every where, and in all things. If we will be faithful herein, our fallen nature must die to all its propensities.

Supporting a life of godliness, is like unto successful management and economy in outward and domestic affairs. If attention is not paid to minute matters, frugally to save, and avoid unnecessary expenses, there is a greater probability step by step of a declension in point of property than by large undertakings which naturally excite caution. He who learns, by Divine assistance, to make a right application in small matters of a spiritual nature, will not fail to accumulate much treasure as well as he who is attentive in temporal concerns. Great things are only great because many small materials are brought and combined together—he who is careful to lose nothing, will generally increase his wealth. It is well for us to consider that it is not so much what we do, as the motives of love in which our actions originate, and surrendering our own wills; this it is alone which renders our good works acceptable in the Divine sight. People judge of our actions according to outward observation, but with God those things are nothing, which in the eyes of men shine with great lustre, for he requires a sincere intention, a will ready to bend to his will on all occasions, and an upright entire forsaking ourselves.

Our faith is tried more powerfully in common occurrences, and less exposed to a mixture of pride, than in uncommon and remarkable concerns. We also find that we are many times more attached to certain little things than to matters of moment—for instance, some would find it much easier to give generous alms, than to deny themselves a favourite diversion. Man is very liable to become beguiled by little things, because he looks on them as matters of indifference, and imagines himself free from any powerful attachment to them; but when God commands him to forsake them, he finds by painful experience how inordinate and unwarrantable his attachment to and practice of them was; besides, through our inattention to small duties, we frequently give offence and stumble our families, and those about us; for people cannot believe that we fear God with uprightness, when our conduct in small concerns is immoderate and careless; for how can an observer reconcile the idea of our being strong and scrupulous observers of important duties that require the greatest sacrifices, when matters of small account have an undue ascendancy over us; but the greatest danger herein is, that the soul through careless indifference in lesser things, becomes gradually accustomed to unfaithfulness, grieves the Holy Spirit, and by degrees learns to account it a matter of small consequence to go counter to the will of God: on the contrary, true love esteems nothing indifferent; every thing capable of pleasing or displeasing God appearing great: not that true love drives the soul into a slavish, fearful scrupulousness, but it allows of no particular set bounds to faithfulness; it moves the mind in simplicity to pass by those things that God doth not require, but does not hesitate about those things he does require, be they great or small; so that our obedience in small matters does not originate from a forcible terror on the mind; it all arises in and by a current and power of love, free from those slavish fears and consultations, accompanying restless, anxious, and distressed souls. Man is drawn into the way of his duty through love to God; for even in the time of greatest trial, when the spirit of truth unceasingly urges the submissive soul step by step in the observance of small duties, and seems about to divest it of all freedom, behold it finds itself on a wide plain, and enjoys the depth of peace and freedom in him.—Oh! how happy is that soul.

Finally, it is particularly necessary for those who are naturally of an inadvertent and unwatchful disposition to be mindful. Man by paying little regard to small duties, becomes accustomed to make no account of them; he does not enough consider the lead and tendency thereof;—he does not enough view the almost imperceptible ascendancy and assimilation

of these things in and with his fallen propensities—he forgets the compunction and remorse these things have heretofore occasioned:—he had rather indulge an imaginary idea of his establishment, and depend on his own judgment, (which has however oftentimes deceived him) than to settle down into a constant, diligent, attentive watchfulness. We are apt to say, it is a little thing, it is nothing, yea, it is nothing!—but it is such a nothing on which thy all depends—such a nothing as thou so inordinately lovest, as to cleave to it in preference to the will of God—such a nothing, which thou wilt despise in words, in order to frame an excuse for thy non-observance of it; but in the ground it is such a nothing which thou holdest fast, against the will of God, and which, if continued in, will bring thee to ruin.

Despising small things does not, as some assert, arise from greatness of mind, but far otherwise, from a short sightedness, esteeming things small which in their tendency and consequences have a very extensive reach and effect. The more we discover ourselves inclined to indifference in small things, and the more we find it a trial to us to pay attention herein, the more we ought to fear and become jealous, yea, and to cast up bulwarks against a spirit of indifference and carnal security—he that despises little things, will certainly fall by little and little. Be not afraid of a constant watchfulness of mind in small things: a godly resolution is necessary in the beginning, and the exercise and suffering thou endurest, thou hast well deserved, it being very necessary for the perfecting thy peace and security, out of which there is nothing but disquiet and backsliding. God will render this path more and more sweet and pleasant. True love is watchful and attentive without great and painful restraint of spirit.

Augustine saith,

“Quod minimum est, minimum est, sed in minimo fidelem esse magnum est.”

“Little things are little things, but to be faithful in little things is some thing great.”

THE
UNIVERSALITY
AND
EFFICACY
OF
DIVINE GRACE.



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THE
UNIVERSALITY AND EFFICACY
OF
DIVINE GRACE

SEEING the height of all happiness is placed in the true knowledge of God, "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," (John, xvii. 3,) the true and right understanding of this foundation and ground of knowledge is that which is most necessary to be known and believed. "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son revealeth him," (Matt. xi. 27,) and the revelation of the Son is in and by the spirit; therefore the testimony of the spirit is that alone by which the true knowledge of God hath been, is, and can be revealed.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ has declared, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me," (John, xiv. 6.) Hence he is fitly called the mediator betwixt God and man: for having been with God from all eternity, being himself God, and also in time partaking of the nature of man, through him is the goodness and love of God conveyed to mankind, and by him again man receiveth and partaketh of these mercies.

God, out of his infinite love, "who delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but that all should live and be saved," (Ezek. xviii. 32, and xxxiii. 11,) "hath so loved the world, that he hath given his only Son a *light*, that whosoever believeth in him shall be saved," (John, iii. 16,) "who enlighteneth *every* man that cometh into the world," (John, i. 9,) "and maketh manifest all things that are reprovab," (Ephes. v. 13,) and teacheth all temperance, righteousness and godliness. This *light* enlighteneth the hearts of all in order to salvation, and would work out the salvation of all, if not resisted. Nor is it less *universal* than the seed of sin, being the purchase of his death, "who tasted death for every man: for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv. 22.) "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal," (1 Cor. xii. 7.) This most certain doctrine

being then received, that there is an evangelical and saving light and grace in all, the universality of the love and mercy of God towards mankind, both in the death of his beloved Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the manifestation of the light in the heart, is established and confirmed. Therefore Christ "hath tasted death for every man;" (Heb. ii. 9,) not only for all kinds of men as some vainly talk, but for every man of all kinds; the benefit of whose offering is not only extended to such who have the distinct outward knowledge of his death and sufferings, as the same is declared in the Scriptures, but even unto those who are necessarily excluded from the benefit of this knowledge.

God, who out of his infinite love sent his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world, who tasted death for every man, hath given to every man, whether Jew or Gentile, Turk or Scythian, Indian or Barbarian, of whatsoever nation, country or place, a certain day or time of visitation; during which day or time it is possible for them to be saved, and to partake of the fruits of Christ's death.

For this end God hath communicated and given unto every man a measure of the light of his own Son, a measure of grace, or a measure of the Spirit, which the Scripture expresses by several names, as the "seed of the kingdom," (Matt. xiii. 18, 19,) "the light that makes all things manifest," (Eph. v. 13,) "the Word of God," (Rom. x. 17,) or "the manifestation of the Spirit given to profit withal," (1 Cor. xii. 7,) "a little leaven," (Matt. xiii. 33,) "the gospel preached in every creature." (Col. i. 23.)

In and by this light and seed, he invites, calls, exhorts, and strives with every man, in order to save him; which, as it is received and not resisted, works the salvation of all, even of those who are ignorant of the death and sufferings of Christ, and of Adam's fall, both by bringing them to a sense of their own misery, and to be sharers in the sufferings of Christ inwardly, and by making them partakers of his resurrection, in becoming holy, pure, and righteous, and recovered out of their sins. By which also are saved them that have the knowledge of Christ outwardly, in that it opens their understanding rightly to use and apply the things delivered in the Scriptures, and to receive the saving use of them: but this may be resisted and rejected in both, in whom then God is said to be resisted and pressed down, and Christ to be again crucified, and put to open shame in and among men. And to those who thus resist and refuse him, he becomes their condemnation.

According to this doctrine the mercy of God is excellently

well exhibited, in that none are necessarily shut out from salvation; and his justice is demonstrated, in that he condemns none but such to whom he really made offer of salvation, affording them the means sufficient thereunto.

This doctrine, if well weighed, will be found to be the foundation of Christianity, salvation and assurance.

It agrees and answers with the whole tenor of the Gospel promises and threats, and with the nature of the ministry of Christ; according to which, the Gospel, salvation, and repentance, are commanded to be preached to every creature, without respect of nations, kindred, families, or tongues.

It magnifies and commends the merits and death of Christ, in that it not only accounts them sufficient to save all, but declares them to be brought so nigh unto all, as thereby to put all into the nearest capacity of salvation.

It exalts pre-eminently the grace of God, to which it attributeth all good, even the least and smallest actions that are so; ascribing thereunto not only the first beginnings and motions of good, but also the whole conversion and salvation of the soul.

It contradicts that false doctrine which exalts the light of nature, the liberty of man's will, in that it wholly excludes the natural man from having any place or portion in his own salvation, by any acting, moving, or working of his own, until he be first quickened, raised up, and actuated by God's Spirit.

As it makes the whole salvation of man solely and alone to depend upon God, so it makes his condemnation wholly and in every respect to be of himself, in that he refused and resisted somewhat that from God wrestled and strove in his heart, and forces him to acknowledge God's just judgment in rejecting and forsaking him.

It takes away all ground of despair, in that it gives every one cause of hope and certain assurance that they may be saved; neither doth feed any in security, in that none are certain how soon their day may expire: and therefore it is a constant incitement and lively encouragement to every man, to forsake evil, and close with that which is good.

It wonderfully commends, as well the certainty of the Christian religion among infidels, as it manifests its own verity to all, in that it is confirmed and established by the experience of all men; seeing there was never yet a man found in any place of the earth, however barbarous and wild, but hath acknowledged, that at some time or other, less or more, he hath found somewhat in his heart reproving him for some thing

evil which he hath done, threatening a certain horror if he continued in them, as also promising and communicating a certain peace and sweetness, as he has given way to it, and not resisted it.

It wonderfully showeth the excellent wisdom of God, by which he hath made the means of salvation so universal and comprehensive, that it is not needful to recur to miraculous and strange ways; seeing, according to this most true doctrine, the Gospel reacheth all, of whatsoever condition, age, or nation.

It is really and effectively, though not in so many words, yet by deeds, established and confirmed by all the preachers, promulgators, and doctors of the Christian religion that ever were, or now are, even by those that otherways in their judgment oppose this doctrine, in that they all, whatever they have been or are, or whatsoever people, place, or country they come to, do preach to the people, and to every individual among them, that they may be saved; intreating and desiring them to believe in Christ, who hath died for them. Such is the evidence and virtue of Truth, that it constrains its adversaries even against their wills to plead for it.

That which every man is bound to believe, is true. But every man is bound to believe that God is merciful unto him: it is therefore true. This assumption no man can deny, seeing his mercies are said to be over all his works. And herein the Scripture every way declares the mercy of God to be, in that he invites and calls sinners to repentance, and hath opened a way of salvation for them: so that though those men be not bound to believe the history of Christ's death and passion who never came to know of it, yet they are bound to believe that God will be merciful to them, if they follow his ways; and that he is merciful unto them, in that he reproves them for evil, and encourages them to good.

This seed, light, or grace, is a real spiritual substance, which the soul of man is capable to feel and apprehend, from which that real, spiritual, inward birth in believers arises, called the new creature, the new man in the heart. For it is in, and by this inward and substantial seed, as it is allowed to operate in our hearts, that we come to have those spiritual senses raised, by which we are made capable of tasting, smelling, seeing, and handling the things of God: for a man cannot reach unto those things by his natural spirit and senses. It is not hereby intended any ways to lessen or derogate from the atonement and sacrifice of Jesus Christ; but on the contrary to magnify and exalt him. For as all those things were certainly trans-

acted which are recorded in the holy Scriptures concerning the birth, life, miracles, sufferings, resurrection and ascension of Christ ; so it is the duty of every one to believe it, to whom it pleases God to reveal the same, and to bring to them the knowledge of it. Nevertheless, as it was necessary that Christ should come, that by his death and sufferings he might offer up himself a sacrifice to God for our sins, who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree ; so the remission of sins which any partake of, is only in and by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice, and no otherwise. For it is by the obedience of that one, that the free gift is come upon all to justification. For as all men partake of the fruit of Adam's fall, in that by reason of that evil seed, which through him is communicated unto them, they are prone and inclined unto evil, though thousands of thousands be ignorant of Adam's fall, neither ever knew of the eating of the forbidden fruit ; so also many may come to feel the influence of this holy and divine seed and light, and be turned from evil to good by it, though they know nothing of Christ's coming in the flesh, through whose obedience and sufferings it is purchased unto them. And as it is absolutely needful that those do believe the history of Christ's outward appearance, whom it pleased God to bring to the knowledge of it ; so that outward knowledge is very comfortable to such as are subject to and led by the inward seed and light.

It will manifestly appear by what is above said, that this divine principle is not any part of man's nature, nor yet any reliques of any good which Adam lost by his fall, in that it is a distinct separate thing from man's soul, and all the faculties of it. It is also to be distinguished from man's natural conscience ; for conscience being that in man which ariseth from the natural faculties of man's soul, may be defiled and corrupted. It is said expressly of the impure, "that even their mind and conscience is defiled;" (Tit. i. 15,) but this light can never be corrupted nor defiled ; neither did it ever consent to evil or wickedness in any : for it is said expressly, that "it makes all things manifest that are reproveable," (Eph. v. 13,) and so is a faithful witness for God against every unrighteousness in man. Now *conscience*, to define it truly, comes from *con-scire*, and is that knowledge which ariseth in man's heart, from what agreeth, contradicteth, or is contrary to any thing believed by him, whereby he becomes conscious to himself that he transgresseth by doing that which he is persuaded he ought not to do. So that the mind being once blinded or defiled with a wrong belief, there ariseth a conscience from

that belief, which troubles him when he goes against it. Thus, then, man's natural conscience is sufficiently distinguished from it ; for conscience followeth the judgment, doth not inform it : but this light, as it is received, removes the blindness of the judgment, opens the understanding, and rectifies both the judgment and conscience. So, therefore, conscience is an excellent thing, where it is rightly informed and enlightened. To the light of Christ, then, in the conscience, and not to man's natural conscience, it is to which he is to attend, as to a most certain guide unto life eternal.

This light, seed, &c., appears to be no power or natural faculty of man's mind ; because a man that is in his health can, when he pleases, stir up, move, and exercise the faculties of his soul ; he is absolute master of them ; and except there be some natural cause or impediment in the way, he can use them at his pleasure : but this light and seed of God in man he cannot move and stir up when he pleaseth ; but it moves, blows, and strives with man, as the Lord pleaseth. For though there be a possibility of salvation to every man during the day of his visitation, yet cannot a man at any time when he pleaseth, or hath some sense of his misery, stir up that light or grace, which comes upon all at certain times and seasons ; wherein it works powerfully upon the soul, mightily tenders it, and breaks it ; at which time if man resist it not, but closes with it, he comes to know salvation by it. Now, there is no man alive, and there shall be none to whom this paper shall come, who if he will deal faithfully and honestly with his own heart, will not be forced to acknowledge that he has been sensible of this in some measure, less or more ; which is a thing that man cannot bring upon himself with all his pains and industry. This, then, O man and woman ! is the day of God's gracious visitation to thy soul, which if thou resist not, thou shalt be happy forever. This is the day of the Lord, which, as Christ saith, "is like the lightning, which shineth from the east unto the west," (Matt. xxiv. 27,) and the "wind or spirit, which blows upon the heart, and no man knows whither it goes, nor whence it comes." (John, iii. 8.)

As the grace and light in all is sufficient to save all, and of its own nature would save all ; so it strives and wrestles with all in order to save them ; he that resists its striving, is the cause of his own condemnation ; he that resists it not, it becomes his salvation : so that in him that is saved, the working is of the grace, and not of the man ; and it is a passiveness rather than an act ; though afterwards, as man is wrought upon, there is a will raised in him, by which he comes

to be a co-worker with the grace. So that the first step is not by man's working, but by his not contrary working. And at these singular seasons of every man's visitation above mentioned, as man is wholly unable of himself to work with the grace, neither can he move one step out of his natural condition, until the grace lay hold upon him; so it is possible for him to be passive, and not to resist it, as it is possible for him to resist it. So, the grace of God works in and upon man's nature; which, though of itself wholly corrupted and defiled, and prone to evil yet is capable to be wrought upon by the grace of God; even as iron, though an hard and cold metal of itself, may be warmed and softened by the heat of the fire, and wax melted by the sun. And as iron or wax, when removed from the fire or sun, returneth to its former condition of coldness and hardness; so man's heart, as it resists or retires from the grace of God, returns to its former condition again. The manner of God's working, in order to salvation, may be illustrated by the example of divers men lying in a dark pit together, where all their senses are so stupified that they are scarce sensible of their own misery. Such is man in his natural, corrupt, fallen condition. A deliverer comes at certain times, and fully informs these men of the great misery and hazard they are in, if they continue in that noisome place; yea, forces them to a certain sense of their misery, for the wickedest men at times are made sensible of their misery by God's visitation, and not only so, but lays hold upon them, and gives them a pull, in order to lift them out of their misery; which if they resist not will save them; only they may resist it. Thus both the mercy and justice of God are established, and the will and strength of man are brought down and rejected; his condemnation is made to be of himself, and his salvation only to depend upon God.

Having thus clearly stated the question, the first thing to be proved is, that God hath given to every man a day or time of visitation, wherein it is possible for him to be saved. If it can be proved that there is a day and time given, in which those might have been saved that actually perish, the matter is done: for none deny but those that are saved have a day of visitation. This, then, appears by the regrets and complaints which the Spirit of God throughout the whole Scriptures makes, even to those that did perish; sharply reproving them, for that they did not accept, nor close with God's visitation and offer of mercy to them. Thus the Lord expresses himself first of all to Cain, "And the Lord said unto Cain, why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt

thou not be accepted? If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." (Gen. iv. 6, 7.) This was said to Cain before he slew his brother Abel, when the evil seed began to tempt him, and work in his heart; we see how God gave warning to him in season, and in the day of his visitation towards him, acceptance and remission if he did well: for this interrogation, shalt thou not be accepted? imports an affirmative, thou shalt be accepted, if thou doest well. So that, if we may trust God Almighty, the fountain of all truth and equity, it was possible even for Cain to have been accepted. Neither could God have proposed the doing of good as a condition, if he had not given him sufficient strength, whereby he was capable to do good. This the Lord himself also shows, even that he gave a day of visitation to the old world. "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man." (Gen. vi. 3.) This manifestly implies, that his Spirit did strive with man, and doth strive with him for a season; which season expiring, God ceaseth to strive with him, in order to save him.

That there is a day of visitation given to the wicked, wherein they might have been saved, and which being expired, they are shut out from salvation, appears evident by Christ's lamentation over Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not: behold your house is left unto you desolate." (Luke, xiii. 34 and 35.) "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes." (Luke, xix. 41 and 42.) First, he insinuates that there was a day wherein the inhabitants of Jerusalem might have known those things that belonged to their peace. Secondly, that during that day he was willing to have gathered them even as a hen gathereth her chickens. Thirdly, that because they refused, the things belonging to their peace were hid from their eyes. Why were they hid? Because you would not suffer me to gather you; ye would not see those things that were good for you, in the season of God's love towards you; and therefore now, that day being expired, ye cannot see them.

If God plead with the wicked, from the possibility of their being accepted; if God's Spirit strive in them for a season, in order to save them, who afterwards perish; if he wait to be gracious unto them; if he be long-suffering towards them; and if this long-suffering be salvation to them while it endureth,

during which time God willeth them not to perish, but exhibiteth to them the riches of his goodness and forbearance to lead them to repentance; then there is a day of visitation wherein such might have been, or some such now may be saved, who have perished, or may perish, if they repent not.

This, then, is that faithful witness and messenger of God that bears witness for God, and for his righteousness in the hearts of all men: for he is said to be "given for a witness to the people." (Isa. lv. 4.) And as this word beareth witness for God, so it is not placed in men only to condemn them: for as he is given for a witness, so saith the prophet, he is given for a leader and commander. "The light is given, that all through it may believe," (John, i. 7,) for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, which is placed in man's heart, both to be a witness for God, and to be a means to bring man to God through faith and repentance: it is therefore powerful, that it may divide betwixt the soul and the spirit; it is like a two-edged sword, that it may cut off iniquity from him, and separate betwixt the precious and the vile; and because man's heart is cold and hard like iron, therefore hath God placed his word in him, which is said to be like a "fire," and like a "hammer," (Jer. xxiii. 29,) that like as by the heat of the fire the iron, of its own nature cold, is warmed and softened, and by the strength of the hammer is framed according to the mind of the worker; so the cold and hard heart of man is by the virtue and powerfulness of this word of God near and in the heart, as it resists not, warmed and softened, and receiveth an heavenly impression and image.

Those that have the Gospel and Christ outwardly preached unto them, are not saved but by the working of the grace and light, in their hearts, which is evident, from the words of Christ to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John, iii. 3.) Now, this birth cometh not by the outward preaching of the Gospel, or knowledge of Christ, or historical faith in him; seeing many have that, and firmly believe it, who are never thus renewed. This new creature proceeds from the work of this light and grace in the heart; it is that word which we speak of, that is sharp and piercing, that implanted word, able to save the soul, by which this birth is begotten; "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Pet. i. 23.) Though, then, this seed be small in its appearance, so that Christ compares it to a "grain of mustard-seed, which is the least of all seeds," (Matt. xiii. 31, 32,) and that it be hid in

the earthly part of man's heart: yet therein is life and salvation towards the sons of men wrapped up, which comes to be revealed as they give way to it: so it is neither lo here, nor lo there, in this or the other observation, that this is known, but as this seed of God in the heart is minded and entertained.

By the operation of this light and seed, some have been, and may yet be saved, to whom the Gospel is not outwardly preached, nor the history of Christ outwardly known. To whom the Gospel, the power of God unto salvation, is manifest, they may be saved, whatever outward knowledge they want. But this Gospel is preached in every creature; in which is certainly comprehended many that have not the outward knowledge: therefore, of those many may be saved.

The grace of God, that brings salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." (Titus, ii. 11.) First, it testifies that it is no natural principle or light, but saith plainly, it brings salvation. Secondly, it says not that it hath appeared to a few, but unto all men. The fruit of it declares also how efficacious it is, seeing it comprehends the whole duty of man: it both teacheth us, first to forsake evil, to deny ungodliness and wordly lusts; and then it teacheth us our whole duty. First, to live soberly; that comprehends temperance, chastity, meekness, and those things that relate unto a man's self. Secondly, righteously; that comprehends equity, justice, and honesty, and those things which relate to our neighbours. And lastly, godly; which comprehends piety, faithfulness, and devotion, which are the duties relating to God. So, then, there is nothing required of man, or is needful to man, which this grace teacheth not.

As by the offence of one, "judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." (Rom. v. 18.) If all men have received a loss from Adam, which leads to condemnation; then all men have received a gift from Christ, which leads to justification. From all which it naturally follows, that all men, even the heathen, may be saved: for Christ was given as a "light to enlighten the Gentiles." (Isa. xlix. 6.) Many who, though they know not the history of Adam's fall, have been sensible in themselves of the loss that came by it, feeling their inclinations to sin, and the body of sin in them: and though they knew not the coming of Christ, yet were sensible of that inward power and salvation which

came by him, even before as well as since his appearance in the flesh.

Seeing, then, it is by this inward gift, grace, and light, that those that have the Gospel preached unto them, come to have Jesus brought forth in them, and to have the saving and sanctified use of all outward helps and advantages ; and also by this same light, that all may come to be saved, both Jew and Gentile, Scythian, and Barbarian, of whatsoever country or kindred he be ;—and that God calls, invites, and strives with all, in a season, and saveth many, to whom he hath not seen meet to convey this outward knowledge ; therefore those who have the experience of the inward and powerful work of this light in their hearts, even Jesus revealed in them, cannot cease to proclaim the day of the Lord that is arisen, crying out with the woman of Samaria : “ Come and see one that hath told me all that ever I did ; is not this the Christ ? ” (John, iv. 29.) in order that others may come and feel the same in themselves, and may know, that that small thing that reproves them in their hearts, however they have despised and neglected it, is nothing less than the Gospel preached in them ; Christ, the wisdom and power of God, being in and by it seeking to save their souls.

THE END.

THOUGHTS
ON THE
IMPORTANCE
OF
RELIGION.



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No. 3,

THOUGHTS, &c.

EMBARKED on the stream of time, and carried forward with uniform and irresistible force, how many thousands do we see amusing themselves in the pursuit of shadows, or gliding along in stupid unconcern, notwithstanding their surrounding companions daily disappear, and are gone they know not whither. We also, fellow-traveller, are making rapid progress in our course, and it will surely be wise to devote a few moments to reflect upon the most important of all subjects which can possibly occupy our attention;—the purpose of our existence, and the end of our voyage.

If we consider our animal frame, composed of parts essential to the well-being of the whole, and put together with inimitable skill, or survey the means that have been appointed to sustain this fabric, during the limited period of its existence; if we look upon the inferior animals, or study the structure of the vegetable tribes; if, by means of the faculties we possess, we endeavour to understand a little of the laws which appear to regulate the operations incessantly taking place in this lower world; or, if we lift our eyes to those luminous bodies scattered through the immensity of space, all proceeding harmoniously in the paths prescribed to them,—should not our souls be filled with awe and reverence? Nothing short of Infinite Wisdom could have effected this: nothing short of Infinite Power could sustain it for a moment.

This Wisdom and this Power, O fellow-traveller, is God, even *thy* God. He has condescended to create thee what thou art. Kind and benevolent, as unlimited in power, He has provided for thy comfort, thy accommodation, thy pleasure, even here. He has furnished thee with suitable food, has enamelled the fields with flowers, and instructed every warbler of the grove in his peculiar song. He has endowed thee with reason, whereby thou mayest understand a little portion of his wonders; and, to crown the whole, has given thee a capacity to acquaint thyself with Him, the Author of them all. Every thing pro-

claims that the object of the Creator is the happiness of his creatures; and if thou be not happy, the fault is in thyself. Do not suppose that thou art placed in this transitory scene merely to eat, to drink, and to sleep, and, after a few years, to vanish away, like a dream or a vision of the night. No:—thy great Creator has called thee into existence at that period which was consistent with his Supreme Will; and though thy frame shall go to decay when it may please him to call for the spirit which animates it, yet be assured that this spirit shall exist for ever. When the present life ceases, thou must enter upon eternity, which will be either miserable beyond description, or unspeakably happy. The few and uncertain moments of thy present state are all that are allowed thee to prepare for it. Be aroused, then, to a just consideration of thy condition: venture not to sleep on the brink of a precipice, but apply thyself in earnest to the great work, before that awful proclamation is made,—‘He that is filthy, let him be filthy still.’ (Rev. xxii. 11.)

The only mean of becoming happy here and hereafter, is by earnestly endeavouring to know and perform the *Will of God*. This we cannot do of ourselves; but *He* is graciously pleased to enable us, by giving to every one of his rational creatures a portion of his good spirit, (Titus ii. 11,) which is secretly operating upon the soul. This it is which makes us uneasy when we do wrong, and which fills the mind with comfort and joy when we do right. Thus the Divine Being communicates with his creatures; thus He is constantly endeavouring to draw them to Himself; and in proportion as they attend to these secret impulses, He manifests himself more and more clearly to them, and they become more closely united to Him. In this way the holy men (2 Peter, i. 21) of old were inspired, and were employed as mediums to convey the most important truths to the rest of mankind. Their writings, collected together, are called the Holy Scriptures, and clearly point out that conduct which will be acceptable to God. (2 Tim. iii. 15.) But above all, they inform us, that in the fulness of time, our merciful Creator (Gal. iv. 4,) displayed his love to his rational creatures in a more conspicuous manner than he had done in preceding dispensations, by sending among them his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, as a pattern and an example to the end of time, and as the Redeemer of men. In him was seen what the world never beheld before; a person, with all the feelings of human nature, and yet without sin: by Him, the means of reconciliation and union with God were most clearly and affectingly displayed, and through Him, those who feel

the weight of their transgressions, must seek for reconciliation. He is the Mediator between sinful man and the source of purity; and though, having accomplished his mission in the flesh, and offered up his life on the cross as a propitiation for the sins of mankind, he is no longer beheld with the outward eye; yet he is present in the hearts of all those who are striving to know and to perform the Divine will: he is influencing them to good thoughts and good actions, and enabling them to overcome their perverse natural inclinations, and to subdue their wills; and thus he is *purifying*, and rendering them acceptable, through himself, to his Heavenly Father. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock—if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.' (Rev. iii. 20.) And again, 'if a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our *abode* with him.' (John, xiv. 23.) Infinite condescension! Unutterable love! His knocks are the monitions of his grace and good spirit in the heart; and to attend to these and follow them, is to *open* unto him. This leads to our purification, and consequent fitness for a closer communion with him. The Heavenly Visiter will now be no longer 'as a wayfaring man who tarryeth only for a night,' but 'we will make our *abode* with him.' This is the essence of true religion; and, let our denominations in this world be what they may, if this be our happy experience, we shall belong to 'the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven.' (Heb. xii. 23.)

But this Divine Spirit, which strives with man for his good, if neglected or resisted, will be gradually withdrawn; we may harden our hearts against it, despise its reproofs, and silence its voice, *for a time*. We shall then be left to ourselves, and permitted to follow our own evil propensities: our souls will be in a state of defilement, and alienation from the source of true happiness, and if we die in this state, dreadful indeed will be our portion. *That* witness for God which we have refused to hear, will then speak out in a voice not to be silenced, and from which we shall be no longer able to escape.

Now is the acceptable time; now, while we have health and strength, let us use all diligence to acquaint ourselves with God, that we may be at peace; for though he desires the salvation of all, (1 Tim. ii. 4,) *he will* be sought unto, and he has graciously promised to be found of those who seek him aright.

Our attempts will be much promoted by occasional and frequent retirement from the hurry and bustle of life, if it were

only for one quarter of an hour at a time; that we may pour out our souls unto our heavenly Father in prayer, beseeching that he would manifest unto us *his* will, help us to subdue *our own*, and bring it into conformity with his. A diligent perusal of the Holy Scriptures is also an excellent mean of strengthening our good desires, and comforting us under trial if we entreat the divine blessing upon it; for this only can open our understandings to receive those eternal truths which are indeed hid from the wise and prudent of this world, but revealed to the babes in Christ. (Mat. xi. 25.)

True prayer is by no means so difficult as some have imagined: every secret aspiration to God, even if no words be uttered, is prayer; and we may be in the exercise of it, even when our hands are engaged in our lawful occupations. This is the prayer which our Lord enjoined to his disciples, that they might not enter into temptation. (Matt. xxvi. 41.) Many awakened souls have suffered great loss, and made for themselves a long wilderness, by consulting with those who were as much at a loss as themselves, and going from one learned man to another, to seek that *without*, which can only be found *within*. The kingdom of God, said Christ, (Luke, xvii. 21.) is *within* you; his constant reference was to *this*: his constant aim, to turn men from a dependence upon the ceremonies of religion to the essence of it. When we are so far convinced of these great truths as to give up ourselves wholly to God, and can say with sincerity, 'Thy will, and not mine, be done;' then we shall enjoy that heavenly communion which constitutes the happiness of the blessed above. Narrow prejudices will no longer exist, our souls will expand with love to our fellow-creatures, and we shall consider all mankind as branches of the same family, having one common Father. We shall feel a real interest in the happiness of all within our influence, and endeavour to promote it to the utmost of our power. These are the effects which would be produced by submitting to the operation of Divine Grace in the heart. We shall then experimentally know that God is good. We shall be qualified to taste and see *how* gracious he is, by his influence upon our minds, by those virtuous thoughts which he awakens in us, by those secret comforts and refreshments which he conveys into our souls, and by those ravishing joys and inward satisfactions, which are perpetually springing up, and diffusing themselves among all the thoughts of good men. He is lodged in our very essence, and is as a soul within the soul, to irradiate its understanding, rectify its will, purify its passions, and enliven all the powers of man. How happy is an intellectual being who

by prayer and meditation, by virtue and good works, opens this communication between God and his own soul! Though the whole creation frown upon him, and all nature look black about him, he has this light and support within him, that are able to cheer his mind, and bear him up in the midst of all those horrors which encompass him. He knows that his helper is at hand, and is always nearer to him than any thing else can be, which is capable of annoying or terrifying him. In the midst of calumny or contempt, he attends to that Being who whispers better things within his soul, and whom he looks upon as his defender, his glory, and the lifter up of his head. In his deepest solitude and retirement, he knows that he is in company with the greatest of Beings; and perceives within himself such real sensations of his presence, as are more delightful than any thing that can be met with in the conversation of his creatures. Even in the hour of death, he considers the pains of his dissolution to be nothing else but the breaking down of that partition which stands betwixt his soul and the sight of that Being who is always present with him, and is about to manifest Himself to him in fullness of joy.* If we duly ponder these things, fellow-traveller, and give our hearts to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the end of *our* journey will be the beginning of a new existence inconceivably glorious, and eternally happy!

* Collection of Papers from the Spectator.

EXTRACT

FROM THE

JOURNAL OF JOB SCOTT.

I AM renewedly confirmed in a sentiment I have long been settled in ; which is, that there never was, and never will be, but one true religion in the world ; to wit, '*The work of the Spirit of God in the souls of mankind ;*' that some of all denominations have something of this true religion, even though some of them, through the prejudice of education, may disallow it in profession ; and that no man has any real religion but what he comes to the knowledge and experience of, through the influence of this Holy Spirit. This it is that begins and carries on the work ; this it is that, by its own divine influence operating in the minds of mankind, reveals Christ in them, 'the hope of glory ;' (Col. i. 27.) or so operates from time to time, on reading the Scriptures, or other good books, on hearing the gospel preached, on meditating on the works of creation and providence, on God's judgments in the earth, or his dealing with themselves, as individuals ; or whatever other occasion, circumstance, or thing, is ever made a mean of conviction or conversion ; the Holy Spirit so operates, I say, in all these cases, as to produce the happy effect : and without the inward operation thereof, all these other opportunities and things would be utterly in vain, as to salvation, and never able to produce the least degree of true religion or sanctification in the soul. So that, though there are many opinions, many creeds, professions, and denominations, and some truly religious persons in them all ; yet there is, and can be but one **TRUE RELIGION** : all true religion is of one kind ; all springs from one source. And blessed and adored for ever be the Lord, in order that all men may, if they will, be benefited experimentally by this one true religion, 'the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.' (1 Cor. xii. 7.) He that rightly profits thereby, and continues so to do, will live in the exercise of the one true faith, will witness the one true Christian baptism, will know and obey the one **Living Lord** ; will, by the Holy Ghost, in word and deed acknowledge

and call him Lord, and so will be saved with an everlasting salvation. And, on the other hand, seeing a measure of the Holy Spirit is given to every man; seeing the Grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; (Tit. ii. 11,) seeing the light and life of the Holy Word which in the beginning was with God, and was God, hath enlightened 'every man that cometh into the world;' (John, i. 9,) and seeing moreover, Christ Jesus has tasted 'death for every man,' (Heb. ii. 9,) how shall we escape if we neglect and reject so great salvation? How great must be the condemnation of every soul, thus highly favoured, which yet stands out and rejects the strivings of the Spirit, the teachings of Grace, the shinings and convictions of this divine Light! Now this Light, Grace, and Spirit of God, is all one, under different appellations. It is called Spirit, because it is quick, lively, and operative; and quickens the soul to a sensibility of its state and condition; it is called Grace, because it is the free, unmerited gift of God; and it is called Light because it makes manifest: as 'whatsoever doth make manifest is Light,' (Eph. v. 13,) say the Scriptures. And as this Grace or Light is attended to, it will bring the soul into a state of Grace and favour with God. Well, therefore, might the Apostle, with holy reverence, break forth in these expressions, 'Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!' (2 Cor. ix. 15.) And all who obey the light will be brought out of darkness into His marvellous Light; for though the hearts of fallen men are grossly darkened, yet the Light shineth in their dark hearts; and though the darkness comprehendeth it not, if it is taken heed unto, it will shine more and more unto the perfect day; even until the whole body be full of light. But those who rebel against the Light, will grow darker and darker, until they know not the way thereof, nor understand the paths thereof; and become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts will become darkened; having loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

A

SUMMARY

OF THE

PRINCIPAL EVIDENCES

FOR

THE TRUTH AND DIVINE ORIGIN

OF THE

CHRISTIAN REVELATION.



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*A Summary of the Principal Evidences for the Truth and Divine
Origin of the CHRISTIAN REVELATION.*

THE method I intend to pursue in this treatise, is to present to my readers the following series of propositions, and then to prove distinctly the truth of each.

I. From considering the state of the heathen world, before the appearance of our Lord upon earth, it is evident that there was an absolute necessity for a revelation of God's will, and, of course, a great probability beforehand that such a revelation would be granted.

II. At the very time when there was a general expectation in the world of some extraordinary personage making his appearance in it, a person called Jesus Christ did actually appear upon earth, asserting that he was the Son of God, and that he was sent from heaven to teach mankind true religion; and he did accordingly found a religion, which from him was called the Christian Religion, and which has been professed by great numbers of people from that time to the present.

III. The books of the New Testament were written by those persons to whom they are ascribed, and contain a faithful history of Christ and his religion; and the account there given of both, may be securely relied upon as strictly true.

IV. The scriptures of the Old Testament (which are connected with those of the New) are the genuine writings of those whose names they bear, and give a true account of the Mosaic dispensation, of the historical facts, the divine commands, the moral precepts, and the prophecies which they contain.

V. The character of Christ, as represented in the gospels, affords very strong ground for believing that he was a divine person.

VI. The sublimity of his doctrines and the purity of his moral precepts confirm this belief.

VII. The rapid and successful propagation of the gospel by the first teachers of it, through a large part of the world, is a proof that they were favoured with divine assistance and support.

VIII. A comparison between Christ and Mahomet and their respective religions, leads us to conclude, that while the religion of the latter was confessedly the invention of man, that of the former was derived from God.

IX. The predictions delivered by the ancient prophets, and fulfilled in our Saviour, show that he was the Messiah expected by the Jews, and that he came into the world by

divine appointment, to be the great deliverer and redeemer of mankind.

X. The prophecies delivered by our Saviour himself, prove that he was endued with the foreknowledge of future events, which belong only to God and to those inspired by him.

XI. The miracles performed by our Lord, demonstrate him to have possessed divine power.

XII. The resurrection of our Lord from the dead, is a fact fully proved by the clearest evidence, and is the seal and confirmation of his divinity and of the truth of his religion.

These are the several points I shall undertake to prove in the following pages; and if these are clearly made out, there can be nothing more wanting to satisfy every reasonable man, that the Christian Religion is a true revelation from God.

PROPOSITION I.—*From considering the state of the heathen world, before the appearance of our Lord upon earth, it is evident that there was an absolute necessity for a divine revelation of God's will, and, of course, a great probability beforehand, that such a revelation would be granted.*

THEY who are acquainted with ancient history, know perfectly well that there is no one fact more certain and more notorious than this: That for many ages before our Saviour appeared upon earth, and at the time he actually did appear, the whole heathen world, even the politest and most civilized, and most learned nations, were, with a very few exceptions, sunk in the most deplorable ignorance of every thing relating to God and to religion; in the grossest superstition and idolatry, and in the most abominable corruption and depravity of manners. They neither understood the true nature of God, nor the attributes and perfections which belong to him, nor the worship that was acceptable to him, nor the moral duties which he required from his creatures; nor had they any clear notions or firm belief of the immortality of the soul, and a state of rewards and punishments in another life. They believed the world to be under the direction of a vast multitude of gods and goddesses, to whom they ascribed the worst passions and the worst vices, that ever disgraced human nature. They worshipped also dead men and women, birds and beasts, insects and reptiles, (especially that most odious and disgusting reptile the serpent,) together with an infinite number of idols, the work of their own hands, from various materials, gold, silver, wood, and stone. With respect to their own conduct, they were almost universally addicted to the most shocking and abominable vices; even many of their solemn religious ceremonies and acts of devotion were scenes of the grossest sensuality and licentiousness. Others of them

were attended with the most savage and cruel superstitions, and sometimes even with human sacrifices.

The description given of the ancient Pagans by St. Paul, in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans, is strictly and literally true. "They were filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, uncleanness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despitesful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."

These are not the mere general declamations of a pious man against the wickedness of the times; they are faithful and exact pictures of the manners of the age, and they are fully and amply confirmed by contemporary heathen writers. They are applied also to a people, highly civilized, ingenious, learned, and celebrated for their proficiency in all liberal arts and sciences. What, then, must have been the depravity of the most barbarous nations, when such were the morals of the most polite and virtuous?

There were, it is true, among all the ancient nations, and especially among the Greeks and Romans, some wise and comparatively good men, called philosophers, who had juster notions of morality and religion than the rest of the world, and preserved themselves to a certain degree unpoluted by the general corruption of the times. But these were few in proportion to the great bulk of mankind, and were utterly unable to produce any considerable change in the prevailing principles and manners of their countrymen. They themselves had but very imperfect and erroneous notions respecting the nature and attributes of God, the worship he required, the duties and obligations of morality, the method of God's governing the world, his design in creating mankind, the original dignity of human nature, the state of corruption and depravity into which it afterwards fell; the particular mode of divine interposition necessary for the recovery of the human race; the means of regaining the favour of their offended Maker, and the glorious end to which God intended finally to conduct them. Even with respect to those great and important doctrines above mentioned, the immortality of the soul, the reality of a future state, and the distribution of rewards and punishments hereafter, they were full of doubt, uncertainty, and hesitation: and rather ardently wished and hoped for, than confidently expected and believed, them. But even what they *did* know with any degree of clearness and certainty, they either would not condescend, or wanted the ability, to render plain and intelligible to the lower

orders of the people. They were destitute also of proper authority to enforce the virtues they recommended; they had no motives to propose powerful enough to overrule strong temptations and corrupt inclinations: their own example, instead of recommending their precepts, tended to counteract them; for it was generally (even in the very best of them) in direct opposition to their doctrines; and the detestable vices to which many of them were addicted, wholly destroyed the efficacy of what they taught.

Above all, they were destitute of those awful sanctions of religion, which are the most effectual restraints on the passions and vices of mankind, and the most powerful incentives to virtue, the rewards and punishments of a future state, which form so essential and important a part of the Christian dispensation.

There was, therefore, a plain and absolute necessity for a divine revelation, to rescue mankind from that gulf of ignorance, superstition, idolatry, wickedness, and misery, in which they were almost universally sunk; to teach them in what manner, and with what kind of external service, God might most acceptably be worshipped, and what expiation he would accept for sin; to give them a full assurance of a future state and a future judgment; to make the whole doctrine of religion clear and obvious to all capacities; to add weight and authority to the plainest precepts, and to furnish men with extraordinary and supernatural assistance, to enable them to overcome the corruptions of their nature. And since it was also plainly worthy of God, and consonant to all our ideas of his goodness, mercy, and compassion to the work of his own hands, that he should thus enlighten, and assist and direct the creatures he had made, there was evidently much ground to expect that such information and assistance would be granted; and the wisest of the ancient heathens themselves thought it most natural and agreeable to right reason to hope for something of this nature.

You may give over, says Socrates, all hopes of amending men's manners for the future, unless God be pleased to send you some other person to instruct you; and Plato declares, that whatever is right, and as it should be, in the present evil state of the world, can be so only by the *particular interposition of God*. Cicero has made similar declarations; and Porphyry, who was a most inveterate enemy to the Christian Religion, yet confesses, that there was wanting *some universal method of delivering men's souls, which no sect of philosophy had ever yet found out*.

These confessions of the great sages of antiquity, infinitely outweigh the assertions of our modern infidels, "that human

reason is fully sufficient to teach man his duty and enable him to perform it; and that, therefore, a divine revelation was perfectly needless." It is true, that, in the present times, a Deist may have tolerably just notions of the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being, of the worship due to him, of the ground and extent of moral obligation, and even of a future state of retribution. But from whence does he derive these notions? Not from the dictates of his own unassisted reason, but (as the philosopher Rousseau himself confesses) from those very scriptures which he despises and reviles, from the early impressions of education, from living and conversing in a Christian country, where those doctrines are publicly taught, and where, in spite of himself, he imbibes some portion of that religious knowledge which the sacred writings have every where diffused and communicated to the *enemies* as well as the friends of the gospel. But they who are destitute of these advantages, they who had nothing but reason to direct them, and therefore knew what reason is capable of doing, when left to itself, much better than any modern infidel (who never was, and never can be, precisely in the same predicament;) these men uniformly declare, that the mere light of nature was *not* competent to conduct them into the road of happiness and virtue; and that the only *sure and certain guide* to carry men well through this life *was a divine discovery of the truth*. These considerations may serve to show, that, instead of entertaining any unreasonable prejudices beforehand against the possibility or probability of any divine revelation whatever, we ought, on the contrary, to be previously prepossessed in favour of it, and to be prepared and open to receive it with candour and fairness, whenever it should come supported with sufficient evidence; because, from considering the wants of man and the mercy of God, it appears highly probable that such a revelation would *some time or other* be vouchsafed to mankind.

PROPOSITION II.—*At the very time when there was a general expectation in the world of some extraordinary personage making his appearance in it, a person called Jesus Christ did actually appear upon earth, asserting that he was the Son of God, and that he came from heaven to teach mankind true religion; and he did accordingly found a religion, which from him was called the Christian Religion, and which has been professed by great numbers of people from that time to the present.*

It was necessary just to state this proposition, as the foundation of all the reasoning that is to follow: but the truth of it is so universally acknowledged, that it requires but very few words to be said in support of it.

That there was, about the time of our Saviour's birth, a general expectation spread over the eastern part of the world, that some very extraordinary person would appear in Judea, is evident both from the sacred history and from Pagan writers. St. Matthew informs us, that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, there came wise men (probably men of considerable rank and learning in their own country) from the East, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews; for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him?" In confirmation of this, two Roman historians, Suetonius and Tacitus, assert that there prevailed at that time, over the whole East, an ancient and fixed opinion, that there should arise out of Judea a person who should obtain dominion over the world.

That at this time, when Augustus Cæsar was Emperor of Rome, a person called Jesus Christ was actually born in Judea; that he professed to come from heaven to teach mankind true religion, and that he had a multitude of followers; the sacred historians unanimously affirm, and several heathen authors also bear testimony to the same facts. They mention the very name of Christ, and acknowledge that he had a great number of disciples, who from him were called Christians. The Jews, though professed enemies to our religion, acknowledge these things to be true; and none even of the earliest Pagans who wrote against Christianity, ever pretend to question their reality.—These things are as certain and undeniable as ancient history, both sacred and profane, and the concurrent testimony both of friends and enemies, can possibly make them.

PROPOSITION III.—*The books of the New Testament were written by those persons to whom they are ascribed, and contain a faithful history of Christ and his religion: and the account there given of both, may be securely relied upon as strictly true.*

THE books which contain the history of Christ and of the Christian Religion, are the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. That the gospels were written by the persons whose names they bear, namely, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, there is no more reason to doubt, than that the histories which we have under the names of Xenophon, Livy, or Tacitus, were written by those authors.

A great many passages are alluded to or quoted from the Evangelists, exactly as we read them now, by a regular succession of Christian writers, from the time of the Apostles down to this hour; and at a very early period their names are mentioned as the authors of their respective gospels; which is more than can be said for any other ancient historian whatever.

These books have always been considered by the whole Christian world from the Apostolic age, as containing a faithful history of their religion, and therefore they ought to be received as such; just as we allow the Koran to contain a genuine account of the Mahometan religion, and the sacred books of the Bramins to contain a true representation of the Hindoo religion.

That all the facts related in these writings, and the accounts given of every thing our Saviour said and did, are also strictly true, we have the most substantial grounds for believing:

For, in the first place, the writers had the very best means of information, and could not possibly be deceived themselves.

And, in the next place, they could have no conceivable inducement for imposing upon others.

St. Matthew and St. John were two of our Lord's Apostles; his constant companions and attendants throughout the whole of his ministry. They were actually present at the scenes which they describe; eye witnesses of the facts, and ear witnesses of the discourses, which they relate.

St. Mark and St. Luke, though not themselves Apostles, yet were the contemporaries and companions of Apostles, and in habits of society and friendship with those who had been present at the transactions which they record. St. Luke expressly says this in the beginning of his gospel, which opens with these words: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us; even as *they* delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were *eye witnesses and ministers of the word*, it seemed good to *me* also, *having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first*, to write unto thee, in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the *certainty* of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." St. Luke also being the author of the Acts of the Apostles, we have, for the writers of these five books, persons who had the most *perfect knowledge* of every thing they relate, either from their own personal observation, or from immediate communications with those who saw and heard every thing that passed.

They could not, therefore, be themselves deceived; nor could they have the least inducement, or the least inclination, to deceive others.

They were plain, honest, artless, unlearned men, in very humble occupations of life, and utterly incapable of inventing or carrying on such a refined and complicated system of fraud, as the Christian Religion must have been if it was not true. There are, besides, the strongest marks of fairness, candour, simplicity and truth throughout the whole of their

narratives. Their greatest enemies have never attempted to throw the least stain upon their characters; and how, then, can they be supposed capable of so gross an imposition as that of asserting and propagating the most impudent fiction? They could gain by it neither pleasure, profit nor power. On the contrary, it brought upon them the most dreadful evils, and even death itself. If, therefore, they were cheats, they were cheats without any motive, and without any advantage; nay, contrary to every motive and every advantage that usually influence the actions of men. They preached a religion which forbids falsehood under pain of eternal punishment, and yet, on this supposition, they supported that religion by falsehood; and whilst they were guilty of the basest and most useless knavery themselves, they were taking infinite pains, and going through the greatest labour and sufferings, in order to teach honesty to all mankind.

Is this credible? Is this possible? Is not this a mode of acting so contrary to all experience, to all the principles of human nature, and to all the usual motives of human conduct, as to exceed the utmost bounds of belief, and to compel every reasonable man to reject at once so monstrous a supposition.

The facts, therefore, related in the Gospels, and in the Acts of the Apostles, even those evidently miraculous, *must* be true; for the testimony of those who *die* for what they assert, is evidence sufficient to support *any* miracle whatever. And this opinion of their veracity is strongly confirmed by the following considerations:

There are, in all the sacred writings of the New Testament, continual allusions and references to things, persons, places, manners, customs and opinions, which are found to be perfectly conformable to the real state of things at that time, as represented by disinterested and contemporary writers. Had their story been a forgery, they would certainly have been detected in some mistake or other concerning these incidental circumstances, which yet they have never once been.

Then, as to the facts themselves which they relate, great numbers of them are mentioned and admitted both by Jewish and Roman historians; such as the star that appeared at our Saviour's birth, the journey of the wise men to Bethlehem, Herod's murder of the infants under two years old, many particulars concerning John the Baptist and Herod, the crucifixion of our Lord under Pontius Pilate, and the earthquake and miraculous darkness which attended it. Nay, even many of the miracles which Jesus himself wrought, particularly the curing the lame and blind, and casting out devils, are, as to the *matters of fact*, expressly owned and admitted by several of the earliest and most implacable enemies of Christianity.

For though they ascribed these miracles to the assistance of evil spirits, yet they allowed that the miracles themselves were actually wrought.

This testimony of our adversaries, even to the miraculous parts of the sacred history, is the strongest possible confirmation of the truth and authority of the whole.

It is also certain, that the books of the New Testament have come down to the present times without any material alteration or corruption; and that they are, in all essential points, the same as they came from the hands of their authors.

That in the various transcripts of these writings, as in all other ancient books, a few letters, syllables, or even words, may have been changed, we do not pretend to deny; but that there has been any designed or fraudulent corruption of any considerable part, especially of any doctrine, or any important passage of history, no one has ever been able to prove. Indeed it was absolutely impossible. There can be no doubt but that as soon as any of the original writings came out of the hands of their authors, great numbers of copies were immediately taken, and sent to all the different Christian churches. We know that they were publicly read in the religious assemblies of the first Christians. We know, also, that they were very soon translated into a variety of foreign languages, and these ancient versions (many of which still remain) were quickly dispersed into all parts of the world; nay even several of the original manuscripts remained to the time of Tertullian, at the end of the second century. There are numberless quotations from every part of the New Testament by Christian writers, from the earliest ages down to the present, all which substantially agree with the present text of the sacred writings.—Besides which, a variety of sects and heresies soon arose in the Christian church, and each of these appealed to the scriptures for the truth of their doctrines. It would, therefore have been utterly impossible for any one sect to have made any material alteration in the sacred books without being immediately detected and exposed by all the others. Their mutual jealousy and suspicion of each other would effectually prevent any gross adulteration of the sacred volumes; and with respect to lesser matters, the best and most able critics have, after the most minute examination, asserted and proved, that the holy scriptures of the New Testament have suffered less from the injury of time, and the errors of transcribers, than any other ancient writings whatever.*

* The style, too, of the gospel, (says the amiable and elegant author of, the *Minstrel*) bears intrinsic evidence of its truth. We find there no appearance of artifice or party spirit; no attempt to exaggerate on the one hand, or depreciate on the other; no remarks thrown in to anticipate objections; nothing of that caution which never fails to distinguish the testimony of those who are conscious of

PROPOSITION IV.—*The scriptures of the Old Testament, which are connected with those of the New, are the genuine writings of those whose names they bear, and give a true account of the Mosaic dispensation, as well as of the historical facts, the divine commands, the moral precepts, and the prophecies which they contain.*

THAT part of the Bible, which is called the Old Testament, contains a great variety of very different compositions, some historical, some poetical; written at different times, and by different persons, and collected into one volume by the care of the Jews.

That these books were all written by those whose names they bear, there is not the least reasonable ground to doubt; they have been always considered as the writings of those persons by the whole Jewish nation (who were most interested in their authenticity, and most likely to know the truth) from the earliest times down to the present: and no proof to the contrary has ever yet been produced.

That these writings have come down to us in the same state in which they were originally written, as to all essential points, there is every reason to believe. The original manuscripts were long preserved among the Jews. A copy of the book of the law was preserved in the ark; it was ordered to be read publicly every seven years, at the feast of the tabernacles, as well as privately, and frequently, in every Jewish family.

There is a copy still extant, of the five books of Moses (which are called the Pentateuch) taken by the Samaritans, who were bitter enemies to the Jews, and always at variance with them; and this copy agrees in every material instance, with the Jewish copy.

Near three hundred years before Christ, these scriptures were translated into Greek, and this version (called the Septuagint) agrees also in all essential articles with the Hebrew original. This being very widely spread over the world, rendered any considerable alteration extremely difficult: and the dispersion of the Jews into all the different regions of the globe, made it next to impossible.

The Jews were always remarkable for being most faithful guardians of their sacred books, which they transcribed repeatedly, and compared most carefully with the originals, and of which they even numbered the words and letters. That they have not corrupted any of their own prophetical writings, appears from hence; that we prove Jesus to be the Messiah

imposture; no endeavour to reconcile the reader's mind to what may be extraordinary in narrative: all is fair, candid, and simple. The historians make no reflections of their own, but confine themselves to matter of fact, that is, to what they heard and saw; and honestly record their own mistakes and faults, as well as the other particulars of the story. *Beattie's Evidences*, v. 1. p. 89.

from many of those very prophecies which they have themselves preserved; and which (if their invincible fidelity to their sacred books had not restrained them) their hatred to Christianity would have led them to alter or suppress. And their credit is still further established by this circumstance, that our Saviour, though he brings many heavy charges against the Scribes and Pharisees, yet never once accuses them of corrupting or falsifying any one of their sacred writings.

It is no less certain that these writings give a true and faithful account of the various matters which they contain. Many of the principal facts and circumstances related in them, are mentioned by the most ancient heathen authors. The first origin and creation of the world out of chaos, as described by Moses; the formation of the sun, the moon, and the stars, and afterwards of man himself; the dominion given him over other animals; the completion of this great work in six days; the destruction of the world by a deluge; the circumstances of the ark and the dove; the punishment of Sodom by fire; the ancient rite of circumcision; many particulars relating to Moses, the giving of the law, and the Jewish ritual; the names of David and Solomon, and their leagues with the Tyrians; these things and many others of the same sort, are expressly mentioned, or plainly alluded to, in several Pagan authors of the highest antiquity and the best credit. And a very bitter enemy of the Jews as well as Christians, the Emperor Julian, is, by the force of evidence, compelled to confess, that there were many persons among the Jews, divinely inspired; and that fire from heaven descended on the sacrifices of Moses and Elijah. Add to this, that the references made to the books of the Old Testament, and the passages quoted from them by our Saviour and his Apostles, is a plain proof, that they acknowledged the authority of those writings, and the veracity of their authors.

It is true, indeed; that in the historical books of the Old Testament, there are some bad characters and bad actions recorded, and some very cruel deeds described; but these things are mentioned as mere historical facts, and by no means approved or proposed as examples to others. And excepting these passages, which are comparatively few in number, the rest of those sacred books, more especially Deuteronomy, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Prophets, are full of very sublime representations of God and his attributes; of very excellent rules for the conduct of life, and examples of almost every virtue that can adorn human nature. And these things were written at a time when all the rest of the world, even the wisest and most learned, and most celebrated nations of the earth, were sunk in the

grossest ignorance of God and religion; were worshipping idols and brute beasts, and indulging themselves in the most abominable vices. It is a most singular circumstance, that a people in a remote, obscure corner of the world, very inferior to several heathen nations in learning, in philosophy, in genius, in science, and all the polite arts, should yet be so infinitely their superiors in their ideas of the Supreme Being, and in every thing relating to morality and religion. This can no otherwise be accounted for, than on the supposition of their having been instructed in these things by God himself, or by persons commissioned and inspired by him; that is, of their having been really favoured with those divine revelations, which are recorded in the books of the Old Testament.

With respect to the prophecies which they contain, the truth of a great part of these has been infallibly proved by the exact fulfilment of them in subsequent ages, such as those relating to our Saviour (which will be hereafter specified) to Babylon, to Egypt, to Edom, to Tyre and Sidon. But those which refer more particularly to the dispersion of the Jews are so very numerous and clear, and the accomplishment of them, in the present state of the Jews, is a fact which obtrudes itself, at this moment, so irresistibly upon our senses, that I cannot forbear presenting to the reader some of the most remarkable of those predictions, as they are drawn together by a most able writer.

It was foretold by Moses, that when the Jews forsook the true God, "they should be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, should be scattered among the heathen, among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other; should become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations; and that among those nations they should find no ease, neither should the sole of their foot have rest; but the Lord should give them a trembling heart, and a failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and send a faintness into their hearts in the land of their enemies; so that the sound of a shaken leaf should chase them." The same things are continually predicted through all the following prophets: "That God would disperse them through the countries of the heathen; that he would sift them among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve; that in all the kingdoms of the earth, whither they should be driven, they should be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt, and a curse, and an astonishment and a hissing; and they should abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim."

Had any thing like this, in the time of Moses or of the prophets, ever happened to any nation in the world? Or was

there in nature any probability that any such thing should ever happen to any people? That when they were conquered by their enemies, and led into captivity, they should neither continue in the place of their captivity, nor be swallowed up and lost among their conquerors, but be scattered among all the nations for many ages, and yet continue a distinct people? Or could any description of the Jews, written at this day, be a more exact and lively picture of the state they have now been in for many ages, than these prophetic descriptions, especially that of Moses, given more than three thousand years ago.

PROPOSITION V.—*The character of Christ, as represented in the gospels, affords very strong ground for believing that he was a divine person.*

WHOEVER considers with attention the character of our blessed Lord, as it may be collected from the various incidents and actions of his life, (for there are no laboured descriptions of it, no encomiums upon it, by his own disciples,) will soon discover that it was, in every respect, the most perfect that ever was made known to mankind. If we only say of him what even Pilate said of him, and what his bitterest enemies cannot and do not deny, *that we can find no fault in him*, and that the whole tenor of his life was entirely blameless throughout, this is more than can be said of any other person that ever came into the world. But this is going a very little way indeed in the excellence of his character. He was not only free from every failing, but possessed and practised every imaginable virtue. Towards his heavenly Father he expressed the most ardent love, the most fervent yet rational devotion, and displayed in his whole conduct the most absolute resignation to his will, and obedience to his commands. His manners were gentle, mild, condescending, and gracious: his heart overflowed with kindness, compassion, and tenderness to the whole human race. The great employment of his life was to do good to the bodies and souls of men. In this all his thoughts and all his time were constantly and almost incessantly occupied. He went about dispensing his blessings to all around him in a thousand different ways; healing diseases, relieving infirmities, correcting errors, removing prejudices, promoting piety, justice, charity, peace, harmony, among men, and crowding into the narrow compass of his ministry more acts of mercy and compassion than the longest life of the most benevolent man upon earth ever yet produced. Over his own passions he had the most complete command; and though his patience was continually put to the severest trials, yet he was never once overcome, never once betrayed into

any intemperance or excess in word or deed, "never once spake unadvisedly with his lips." He endured the cruelest insults from his enemies with the utmost composure, meekness, patience, and resignation; displayed the most astonishing fortitude under a most painful and ignominious death, and, to crown all, in the very midst of his torments on the cross, implored forgiveness for his murderers, in that divinely charitable prayer; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Nor was his wisdom inferior to his virtues. The doctrines he taught were the most sublime and the most important that were ever before delivered to mankind, and every way worthy of that God, from whom he professed to derive them, and whose Son he declared himself to be.

His precepts inculcated the purest and most perfect morality; his discourses were full of dignity and wisdom, yet intelligible and clear; his parables conveyed instruction in the most pleasing, familiar, and impressive manner; and his answers to the many insidious questions that were put to him, showed uncommon quickness of conception, soundness of judgment, and presence of mind, completely baffled all the artifices and malice of his enemies, and enabled him to elude all the snares that were laid for him. It appears, then, even from this short and imperfect sketch of our Saviour's character, that he was, beyond comparison, the wisest and most virtuous person that ever appeared; and even his bitterest enemies allow that he was so. If, then, he was confessedly so great and so good, it unavoidably follows that he must be, what he pretended to be, a divine person, and of course his religion also must be divine; for he certainly laid claim to a divine original. He asserted, that he was the Son of God; that he and his religion came from heaven; and that he had power of working miracles. If this was not the case, he must, in a matter of infinite importance, have asserted what had no foundation in truth. But is such a supposition as this in the smallest degree credible? Is it probable, is it conceivable, is it consistent with the general conduct of man, is it reconcilable with the acknowledged character of our Lord, to suppose, that any thing *but* truth could proceed from him whom his very enemies allow to have been in *every* respect (and of course in point of veracity) the best and most virtuous of men? Was it ever known, is there a single instance to be procured in the history of mankind of any one so unblemished in morals as Christ confessedly was, persisting for so great a length of time as he did in assertions, which, if untrue, would be repugnant to the clearest principles of morality, and most fatal in their consequences to those he loved

best, his followers and his friends? Is it possible, that the pure, the upright, the pious, the devout, the meek, the gentle, the humane, the merciful Jesus, could engage multitudes of innocent and virtuous people in the belief and support of a religion which he knew must draw on them persecution, misery and death, unless he had been authorized by God himself to establish that religion; and unless he was conscious that he possessed the power of amply recompensing those who preferred his religion to every other consideration? The common feelings of mankind must revolt at such a preposterous idea.

It follows, then, that Christ was, in truth, a divine teacher, and his religion the gift of God.

PROPOSITION VI.—*The sublimity of our Lord's doctrines and the purity of his moral precepts confirm the belief of his divine mission.*

THERE is no where to be found such important information and such just and noble sentiments concerning God and Religion, as in the scriptures of the New-Testament.

They teach us in the first place, that there is one Almighty Being, who created all things, of infinite power, wisdom, justice, mercy, goodness; that he is the governor and preserver of this world, which he has made; that his providential care is over all his works; and that he more particularly regards the affairs and conduct of men. They teach us, to worship this great Being in spirit and in truth; and that the love of him is the first and great commandment, the source and spring of all virtue. They teach us more particularly, how to pray to him, and for that purpose supply us with a form of prayer, called the Lord's Prayer, "which is a model of calm and rational devotion, and which, for its conciseness, its clearness, its suitableness to every condition, and for the weight, solemnity, and real importance of its petitions, is without an equal or a rival." They teach us moreover, what we all feel to be true, that the human heart is weak and corrupt; that man is fallen from his original innocence; that he is restored however, to the favour of God, and the capacity of happiness by the death and mediation and atonement of Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life; and that he will be assisted in his sincere, though imperfect endeavours after holiness, by the influence of God's Holy Spirit.

They assure us, in fine, that the soul does not perish with the body, but shall pass after death, into another world; that all mankind shall rise from the grave, and stand before the judgment seat of Christ, who shall reward the virtuous, and punish the wicked, in a future and eternal state of existence, according to their deserts.

These are the great, and interesting, and momentous truths, either wholly unknown, or but very imperfectly known to the world before; and they render the meanest peasant in this country better acquainted with the nature of the Supreme Being, and the relation in which we stand to him, than were any of the greatest sages of ancient times.

Equally excellent, and superior to all other rules of life, are the moral precepts of the gospel.

Our Divine Master, in the first place laid down two great leading principles for our conduct, love to God and love to mankind; and thence deduced (as occasions offered, and incidents occurred, which gave peculiar force and energy to his instructions) all the principal duties towards God, our neighbour and ourselves.

With respect to God, we are commanded to love, fear, worship, and obey him; to set him always before us; to do all things to his glory; to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness; to resign ourselves wholly to his pleasure, and submit, with patience, cheerfulness, and resignation, to every thing he thinks fit to bring upon us.

With regard to our neighbour, we are to exercise towards him the duties of charity, justice, equity, and truth; we are to love him as ourselves, and to do unto all men as we would they should do unto us; a most admirable rule, which comprehends the sum and substance of all social virtue, and which no man can mistake.

As to those duties which concern ourselves we are commanded to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, to be temperate in all things, to keep under our body, and bring it into subjection, to preserve an absolute command over all our passions, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

These are the general directions given for our conduct in the various situations and relations of life. More particular injunctions are given in various parts of scripture, especially in our Saviour's admirable sermon from the mount, where we find a multitude of most excellent rules of life, short, sententious, solemn and important, full of wisdom and dignity, yet intelligible and clear. But the principal excellence of the gospel morality, and that which gives it an infinite superiority over all other moral instructions, is this; that it prefers a meek, yielding, complying, forgiving temper, to that violent, overbearing, inflexible, imperious disposition, which prevails so much in the world; that it regulates not merely our actions, but our affections and our inclinations; and places the check to licentiousness exactly where it ought to be, that is, on the heart; that it forbids us to covet the praise of men in

our devotions, our alms, and all our other virtues; that it gives leading rules and principles for all the relative duties of life; of husbands and wives, of parents and children, of masters and servants, of Christian teachers and their disciples, of governors and subjects; that it commands us to be, as it were, lights in the world, and examples of good to all: to injure no man, but to bear injuries patiently; never to seek revenge, but to return good for evil; to love our very enemies, and to forgive others as we hope to be forgiven; to raise our thoughts and views above the present life, and to fix our affections principally on that which is to come.

But besides all this, the *manner* in which our Lord delivered all his doctrines and all his precepts; the concise, sententious, solemn, weighty maxims into which he generally compressed them; the easy, familiar, natural, pathetic parables in which he sometimes clothed them; that divine authority, and those awful sanctions with which he enforced them; these circumstances give a weight, and dignity and importance to the precepts of holy writ, which no other moral rules can boast.

If now we ask, as it is very natural to ask, who that extraordinary person could be, that was the author of such uncommonly excellent morality as this? the answer is, that he was, to all outward appearance, the reputed son of a carpenter, living with his father and mother in a remote and obscure corner of the world, until the time that he assumed his public character. "Whence, then, had this man these things, and what wisdom is this that was given unto him?" He had evidently none of the usual means or opportunities of cultivating his understanding or improving his mind. He was born in a low and indigent condition, without education, without learning, without any ancient stores from whence to draw his wisdom and his morality, that were at all likely to fall into his hands. You may, perhaps, in some of the Greek or Roman writers, pick out a few of his precepts, or something like them. But what does this avail? Those writers, he had never read. He had never studied at Athens or at Rome; he had no knowledge of orators or philosophers. His fellow labourers, the persons who assisted him during his life, and into whose hands his religion came after his death, were a few fishermen on the Lake of Tiberias, as unlearned and uneducated, and, for the purpose of framing rules of morality, as unpromising, as himself. Is it possible then, that such men as these could, without any assistance whatever, produce such perfect and incomparable rules of life as those of the gospel; so greatly superior in purity, solidity, perspicuity, and universal usefulness, to all the moral lessons of all the

philosophers upon earth put together? Every man of common sense must see that this is absolutely impossible; and that there is no other conceivable way of accounting for this, than by admitting what these persons constantly affirmed, that their doctrines and their precepts came from the fountain of all perfection, that is, from God himself.

PROPOSITION VII.—*The rapid and successful propagation of the gospel by the first teachers of it, through a large part of the world, is a proof that they were favoured with divine assistance and support.*

WE find in the Acts of the Apostles, and in their Epistles, that the number of converts to the Christian Religion began to increase considerably almost immediately after our Saviour's ascension, and continued increasing to an astonishing degree through every age until the final establishment of Christianity by Constantine. The first assembly which we meet with of Christ's disciples, and that a few days after his removal from the world, consisted of one hundred and twenty. About a week after this, three thousand were added in one day; and the number of Christians publicly baptized, and publicly associating together, was very soon increased to five thousand. In a few years after this, the converts were described as increasing in great numbers, in great multitudes, and even in myriads, tens of thousands; and multitudes, both of men and women continued to be added daily; so that within about thirty years after our Lord's death, the gospel was spread, not only throughout almost all parts of the Roman Empire, but even to Parthia and India. It appears from the Epistles written to several churches by the Apostles, that there were large congregations of Christians, both at Rome and in all the principal cities of Greece and Asia. This account is confirmed by contemporary Roman historians; and Pliny, about eighty years after the ascension, complains that this *superstition*, as he calls it, had seized not cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country; that the Pagan temples were almost deserted, the sacred solemnities suspended, and scarce any purchasers to be found for the victims. About twenty years after this, Justin Martyr, a Christian writer, declares, that there was no nation of men, whether Greeks or barbarians, not excepting even those savages that wandered in clans from one region to another, and had no fixed habitation, who had not learned to offer prayers and thanksgivings to the Father and Maker of all, in the name of Jesus, who was crucified. And thus the Church of Christ went on increasing more and more, till, under Constantine, the empire

became Christian; at which time there is every reason to believe that the Christians were more numerous and more powerful than the Pagans.

In what manner, now, can we account for this wonderful and unexampled progress of the Christian Religion?

If this religion had set out with flattering the corrupt passions of mankind, and held up to them the prospect of power, wealth, rank, or pleasure, as the rewards of their conversion; if it had soothed their vices, humoured their prejudices, and encouraged their ancient superstitions; if the persons who taught it had been men of brilliant talents, or commanding eloquence; if they had first proposed it in times of darkness and ignorance, and among savage and barbarous nations; if they had been seconded by all the influence and authority of the great potentates of the earth, or propagated their doctrines at the head of a victorious army, one might have seen some reason for their extraordinary success.

But it is well known that the very reverse of all this was the real truth of the case. It is well known, that the first preachers of the gospel declared open war against all the follies, the vices, the interests, the inveterate prejudices, and favourite superstitions of the world; that they were (with a few exceptions) men of no abilities, no learning, no artificial rhetoric or powers of persuasion; that their doctrines were promulgated in an enlightened age, and to the most polished nations, and had all the wit and learning, and eloquence and philosophy of the world to contend with: and that, instead of being aided by the authority and influence of the civil powers, they were opposed, and harassed, and persecuted by them, even to death, with the most unrelenting cruelty; and all those who embraced their doctrines were exposed to the same hardships and sufferings.

Is it now credible, that, under these circumstances, twelve poor illiterate fishermen of Galilee should be able, merely by their own natural powers, to spread their new religion in so short a space, over so large a part of the then known world, without any assistance or co-operation from any quarter whatever? Did any thing of the kind ever happen in the world, before or since?

It is plainly unprecedented and impossible. As, therefore, all *human* means of success were against them, what else but *supernatural* means were left for them? It is clear almost to demonstration, that they must have been endowed with those miraculous powers, and favoured with that divine assistance to which they pretended, and which of course proved them to be the messengers of Heaven.

PROPOSITION VIII.—*A comparison between Christ and Mahomet, and their respective religions, leads us to conclude, that while the religion of the latter is confessedly the invention of man, that of the former is derived from God.*

THERE is a religion in the world, called the Mahometan, which is professed in one part of Europe, and most parts of Asia and Africa. The founder of this religion, Mahomet, pretended to be a prophet sent from God; but it is universally allowed, by all who are not Mahometans, and who have searched very carefully into the pretensions of this teacher, that he was an enthusiast and an impostor, and that his religion was a contrivance of his own. Even those persons who reject Christianity, do not think Mahometanism to be true; nor do we ever hear of a Deist embracing it from conviction.

Here, then, we have two religions co-existing together in the world, and both pretending to be revelations from heaven; one of these we know to be a fraud, the other we affirm and believe to be true. If this be so, upon comparing them and their authors together, we may expect to find a most marked and essential difference between them, such a difference as may naturally be supposed to exist between an impostor and a divine teacher, between truth and falsehood. And this, I apprehend, will appear to be actually the case with respect to Christ and Mahomet, and their respective religions.

Mahomet was a man of considerable rank in his own country; he was the grandson of a man of the most powerful and honourable family in Mecca, and, though not born to a great fortune, he soon acquired one by marriage. These circumstances would of themselves, without any supernatural assistance, greatly contribute to the success of his religion. A person considerable by his wealth, of high descent, and nearly allied to the chiefs of his country, taking upon himself the character of a religious teacher in an age of ignorance and barbarism, could not fail of attracting attention and followers.

Christ did not possess these advantages of rank and wealth, and powerful connections. He was born of parents in a very mean condition of life. His relations and friends were all in the same humble situation; he was bred up in poverty, and continued in it all his life, having frequently no place where he could lay his head. A man so circumstanced was not likely, by his own personal influence, to force a new religion, much less a false one, upon the world.

Mahomet indulged himself in the grossest pleasures. He perpetually transgressed even those licentious rules which he had prescribed to himself. He made use of the power he had acquired, to gratify his passions without control, and he

laid claim to a special permission from heaven to riot in the most unlimited sensuality.

Jesus, on the contrary, preserved throughout life, the most unblemished purity and sanctity of manners. He did no sin, but was perfectly holy and undefiled. Not the least stain was ever thrown on his moral character by his bitterest enemies.

Mahomet was violent, impetuous, and sanguinary.

Christ was meek, gentle, benevolent, and merciful.

Mahomet pretended to have secret communications with God, and with the angel Gabriel, which no other person ever saw or heard.

Jesus was repeatedly declared to be the Son of God by voices from heaven, which were plainly and distinctly heard and recorded by others.

The appearance of Mahomet was not foretold by ancient prophecies, nor was there at the time, any expectation of such a person in that part of the world.

The appearance of Christ upon earth was clearly and repeatedly predicted by several ancient prophecies, which most evidently applied to him and to no other; and which were in the keeping of those who were professed enemies to him and his religion. And there was at the time of his birth a general expectation over all the East, that some great and extraordinary personage would then manifest himself to the world.

Mahomet never presumed to foretel any future events, for this plain reason, because he could not foresee them; and had he foretold any thing which did not come to pass, it must have entirely ruined his credit with his followers.

Christ foretold many things which did actually come to pass, particularly his own death and resurrection, and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Mahomet never pretended to work miracles; on the contrary, he expressly disclaimed any such power, and makes several laboured and awkward apologies for not possessing it.

Jesus, we all know, worked a great number of the most astonishing miracles in the open face of day, and in the sight of great multitudes of people. He made the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, the blind to see, and even the dead to rise from the grave.

Mahomet, during the first twelve years of his mission, made use only of argument and persuasion, and in consequence of that gained very few converts. In three years he made only fourteen proselytes, and in seven only eighty-three men and eighteen women.

In the same space of time our Saviour and his Apostles

converted thousands and tens of thousands, and spread the Christian Religion over a great part of Asia.

Mahomet told the Jews, the Christians, and the Arabs, that he taught no other religion than that which was originally taught to their forefathers, by Abraham, Ismael, Moses, and Jesus. This would naturally prejudice them in favour of his religion.

Christ preached a religion which directly opposed the most favourite opinions and prejudices of the Jews, and subverted, from the very foundation, the whole system of Pagan superstition.

Mahomet paid court to the peculiar weaknesses and propensities of his disciples. In that warm climate, where all the passions are ardent and violent, he allowed them a liberal indulgence in sensual gratifications; no less than four wives to each or his followers, with the liberty of divorcing them thrice.

In the same climate, and among men of the same strong passions, Jesus most peremptorily restrained all his followers from adultery, fornication, and every kind of impurity. He confined them to one wife, and forbade divorce, except for adultery only. But what was still more, he required them to govern their eyes and their thoughts, and to check the very first rising of any criminal desire in the soul. He told them, that whoever looked upon a woman, to lust after her, had committed adultery with her already in his heart; and he assured them, that none but the pure in heart should see God. He declared open war, in short, against all the criminal passions, and evil inclinations of mankind, and expressly required all his followers to renounce those favourite sins that did most easily beset them; nay, even to leave father, mother, brethren, sisters, houses, lands, and every thing that was most dear to them, and take up their cross and follow him.

With the view of bribing men to embrace his religion, Mahomet promised to reward his followers with the delights of a most voluptuous paradise, where the objects of their affection were to be almost innumerable, and all of them gifted with transcendent beauty and eternal youth.

Christ entirely precluded his disciples from all hopes of sensual indulgences hereafter, assuring them that in heaven they should neither marry nor be given in marriage, promising them nothing but pure, celestial, spiritual joys, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived.

Beside the powerful attractions of sensual delights, Mahomet had another still more efficacious mode of producing conviction, and gaining proselytes; and that was, force, vio-

lence, and arms. He propagated his religion by the sword; and till he made use of that instrument of conversion, the number of his proselytes was a mere nothing. He was at once a prophet, a warrior, a general, and a conqueror. It was at the head of his armies that he preached the koran. His religion and his conquests went on together; and the former never advanced one step without the latter. He commanded in person in eight general engagements, and undertook by himself and his lieutenants, fifty military enterprises. Death or conversion was the only choice offered to idolaters, and tribute or conversion to Jews and Christians.

Jesus employed no other means of converting men to his religion, but persuasion, argument, exhortation, miracles, and prophecies. He made use of no other force but the force of truth; no other sword but the sword of the Spirit, that is, the word of God. He had no arms, no legions to fight his cause. He was the Prince of Peace, and preached peace to all the world. Without power, without support, without any followers but twelve poor humble men, without one circumstance of attraction, influence, or compulsion, he triumphed over the prejudices, the learning, the religion of his country; over the ancient rites, idolatry, and superstition, over the philosophy, wisdom, and authority of the whole Roman Empire.

The great object of Mahomet was to make his followers soldiers, and to inspire them with a passion for violence, bloodshed, vengeance, and persecution. He was continually exhorting them to fight for the religion of God: and, to encourage them to do so, he promised them the highest honours, and the richest rewards, in paradise. "They who have suffered for my sake, and have been slain in battle, verily I will expiate their evil deeds from them, and I will surely bring them into a garden watered by rivers, a reward from God, and with God is most excellent reward." This duty of warring against infidels is frequently inculcated in the koran, and highly magnified by the Mahomedan divines, who call the sword *the key of heaven and hell*, and persuade their people that the least drop of blood spilt in the war of God, as it is called, is most acceptable unto him; and that defending the territories of the Moslems for one night, is of more avail than a fast of two months. It is easy to see to what a degree of fierceness this must raise all the furious, vindictive passions of the soul, and what a horde of savages and barbarians it must let loose upon mankind.

The directions of Christ to his disciples were of a different temper. He positively forbade them the use of any violence whatever. The sword that was drawn by one of them in his defence he ordered to be sheathed: "Put up thy sword with-

in the sheath; they that use the sword shall perish by the sword." He would not consent to bring down fire from heaven on the Samaritans, who had refused to receive him: "The son of man," he told them, "came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Do violence to no man; resist not evil. Be ye merciful, even as your Father in heaven is merciful. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

The consequence was, that the first followers of Mahomet were men of cruelty and violence, living by rapine, murder, and plunder. The first followers of Jesus were men of meek, quiet, inoffensive, peaceable manners, and in their morals irreproachable and exemplary.

If now, after comparing together the authors of the two religions we have been considering, we take a short view of the sacred books of those religions, the koran and the gospel, we shall find a difference no less striking between them; no less strongly marking the truth of the one and the falsehood of the other.

The koran is highly applauded, both by Mahomet himself and his followers, for the exquisite beauty, purity, and elegance of the language, which they represent as a standing miracle, greater than even that of raising the dead. But admitting its excellence (which yet has been questioned by several learned men) if beauty of style and composition is to be considered as a proof of divine inspiration, the writings of Plato and Xenophon, of Cicero and Cæsar, and a multitude of other inimitable writers in various languages, will have as just a claim to a miraculous origin as the koran. But in truth, these graces of diction, so far from being a circumstance favourable to the koran, create a strong suspicion of its being a human fabrication, calculated to charm and captivate men by the arts of rhetoric and the fascination of words, and thus draw off their attention from the futility of its matter and the weakness of its pretensions. These are the artifices of fraud and falsehood. The gospel wants them not. It disdains the aid of human eloquence, and depends solely on the force of truth and the power of God for its success. "I came not, (as St. Paul sublimely expresses himself,) with excellency of speech, nor with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

But, whatever may be the purity of the language, the matter and substance of the koran cannot bear a moment's comparison with that of the gospel. The narrative is dull, heavy, monotonous, uninteresting; loaded with endless repetitions,

with senseless and preposterous fables, with trivial, disgusting, and even immoral precepts. Add to this, that it has very little novelty or originality to recommend it, the most material parts of it being borrowed from the scriptures of the Old Testament or the new; and even these are so disguised and deformed by passing through the hands of the impostor (who vitiates and debases every thing he touches) that you can hardly know them to be the same incidents or transactions that you read with so much delight in the Bible.

The gospel, on the contrary, is every where concise, simple, original; animated, interesting, dignified; its precepts important, its morality perfect, its sentiments sublime, its views noble and comprehensive, its sanctions awful.

In the koran, Mahomet is perpetually boasting of his own merits and achievements, and the supreme excellence of his book. In the gospel, no encomiums are bestowed by the Evangelists, either on themselves or their writings. Even the virtues of their divine Master are not distinctly specified, or brought forward into a conspicuous point of view. It is from his actions only, and his discourses, not from the observation of his historians, that we can collect the various transcendent excellencies of his character. Here we plainly see the sober modesty of truth opposed to the ostentatious vanity of imposture.

In the description of future rewards and punishments, the koran is minute, circumstantial and extravagant, both in painting the horrors of the one and the delights of the other. It describes things which cannot, and ought not to be described, and enters into detail too horrible, or too licentious, to be presented to the human mind.

In the gospel, the pains and the pleasures of a future life are represented concisely, in strong, but general and indefinite terms, sufficient to give them a powerful, but not an overwhelming influence over the mind.

There is still another, and a very material mark of discrimination between the koran and the gospel.—Mahomet shows throughout, the utmost anxiety to guard against objections, to account for his working no miracles, and to defend his conduct, in several instances, against the charges which he suspects may be brought against him. This is always the case with imposture. It is always suspicious, afraid of being detected, alive to every appearance of hostility, solicitous to anticipate, and eager to repel the accusations of enemies.

Truth has no occasion for such precautions, and therefore never uses them. We see nothing of this sort in the gospel. The sacred historians show not the smallest solicitude, nor take the least pains to obviate cavils or remove difficulties.

They relate plainly and simply what they know to be true. They entertain no doubt of it themselves, and seem to have no suspicion that any one else can doubt it; they therefore leave the facts to speak for themselves, and send them unprotected into the world, to make their way (as they have done) by their own native force and incontrovertible truth.

Such are the leading features of Mahomet and his religion on the one hand, and of Christ and his religion on the other; and never was there a stronger or more striking contrast seen than in this instance. They are, in short, in every essential article, the direct opposites of each other. And as it is on all hands acknowledged that Mahomet was an impostor, it is fair to conclude that Christ, who was the very reverse of Mahomet, was the reverse of an impostor, that is, a real messenger from heaven. In Mahomet we see every distinctive mark of fraud; in Jesus, not one of these is to be found; but, on the contrary, every possible indication and character of truth.

PROPOSITION IX.—*The predictions delivered by the ancient Prophets, and fulfilled in our Saviour, show that he was the Messiah expected by the Jews, and that he came into the world by divine appointment, to be the great Deliverer and Redeemer of mankind.*

THE word Messiah signifies anointed; that is, a person appointed to some high station, dignity or office; because originally among the eastern nations men so appointed (particularly kings, priests, and prophets) were anointed with oil. Hence the word MESSIAH means the person pre-ordained and appointed by God to be the great Deliverer of the Jewish nation, and the Redeemer of all mankind. The word Christ means the same thing.

Now it was foretold concerning the Messiah, that he should come before the sceptre departed from Judah, that is, before the Jewish government was destroyed; and, accordingly, Christ appeared a short time before the period when the Jewish government was totally overthrown by the Romans.

It was foretold that he should come before the destruction of the second temple. "The desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts; the glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former."—Accordingly Christ appeared some time before the destruction of the city and the temple of Jerusalem by the Romans.

It was foretold by the prophet Daniel, that he should come at the end of 490 years after the rebuilding of Jerusalem, which had been laid waste during the captivity of the Jews.

in Babylon, and that he should be cut off; and that afterwards the city and sanctuary of Jerusalem should be destroyed and made desolate. And accordingly, at what time soever the beginning of the 490 years can, according to any fair interpretation of the words, be fixed, the end of them will fall about the time of Christ's appearing; and it is well known how entirely the city and sanctuary were destroyed by the Romans some years after he was cut off and crucified.

It was foretold, that he should perform many great and beneficial miracles; that the eyes of the blind should be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; that the lame man should leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; and this we know was literally fulfilled in the miracles of Christ; the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard.

It was foretold, that he should die a violent death; that he should be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; that the chastisement of our peace should be upon him; and that with his stripes we should be healed; that God would lay on him the iniquity of us all. All which was exactly accomplished in the sufferings of Christ, "who died for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

It was foretold, that to him should the gathering of the people be; and that God would give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession, which was punctually fulfilled by the wonderful success of the gospel, and its universal propagation throughout the world.

Lastly, many more minute circumstances were told of the great Deliverer, or Redeemer, that was to come.

That he should be born of a virgin; that he should be of the tribe of Judah and the seed of David; that he should be born in the town of Bethlehem; that he should ride upon an ass in humble triumph into the city of Jerusalem; that he should be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; that he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver; that he should be scourged, buffeted, and spit upon; that he should be numbered with the transgressors (that is, should be crucified, as he was between two thieves;) that he should have gall and vinegar given him to drink; that they who saw him crucified should mock at him, and at his trusting in God to deliver him; that the soldiers should cast lots for his garments; that he should make his grave with the rich; and that he should rise again without seeing corruption. All these circumstances, it is well known, were foretold, and, to the greatest possible exactness, fulfilled, in the person of Christ.

What now shall we say to these things? Here are upwards of twenty different particulars, many of them of a very extraordinary nature, which, it was foretold, seven hundred years before our Saviour was born, would all meet in him, and which did all actually meet in his person. Is not this a most extraordinary consideration? There are but three possible suppositions that can be made concerning it: either that this was a mere fortuitous coincidence, arising entirely from chance and accident, or that these prophecies were written after the events had taken place; or lastly, that they were real predictions, delivered many years before these events came to pass, and all fulfilled in Christ. That any one should by chance hit upon so many things, which should all prove true, and prove true concerning one and the same person, though several of them were of such a nature as were unlikely to happen *singly*, to *any person whatever*; this, I say, exceeds all bounds of credibility, and all power of conjecture or calculation.

That these prophecies were not written or delivered after the things predicted had happened is most certain; because they are found in books which existed long before those events came to pass, that is, in the books of the Old Testament; and the Jews themselves, the mortal enemies of Christ and his religion, acknowledge that these prophecies were in those books exactly as we now see them many hundred years before Christ came into the world.

The books themselves were in their own keeping, in the keeping of our adversaries, who would undoubtedly take effectual care that nothing favourable to Christ should be fraudulently inserted into them. The Jews were our Librarians. The prophecies were in their custody, and are read in all their copies of the Old Testament as well as in ours. They have made many attempts to *explain* them away, but none to question their authenticity.

It remains then that these are all real predictions, all centering in our Saviour, and in him only, and delivered many centuries before he was born. As no one but God has the foreknowledge of events, it is from him these prophecies must have proceeded; and they show of course, that Christ was the person whom he had for a great length of time pre-determined to send into the world to be the great Deliverer, Redeemer, and Saviour of mankind.

PROPOSITION X.—*The prophecies delivered by our Saviour himself, prove that he was endued with the foreknowledge of future events; which belongs only to God and to those inspired by him.*

HE did very particularly, and at several different times,

foretel his own death, and the circumstances of it; that the chief priests and scribes should condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles, that is, to Pilate and the Roman soldiers, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him; that he should be betrayed into their hands; that Judas Iscariot was the person who should betray him; that all his disciples would forsake him, and flee; and that Peter would particularly thrice deny him in one night. He foretold further, that he would rise again the third day; that after his ascension, he would send down the Holy Ghost on his apostles, which should enable them to work many miracles. He foretold, likewise, many particulars concerning the future success of the gospel, and what should happen to several of his disciples; he foretold what opposition and persecution they should meet with in their preaching; he foretold what particular kind of death Peter should die, and intimated that St. John should live (as he did) till after the destruction of Jerusalem; he foretold that, notwithstanding all opposition and persecution, the gospel should yet have such success as to spread itself over the world; and, lastly, he foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, with such very particular and minute circumstances, in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, the 13th of St. Mark, and the 21st of St. Luke, that no one who reads the description of that event, in the historians of those times, can have the smallest doubt of our Saviour's divine foreknowledge. We have a most authentic, exact, and circumstantial account of the siege and destruction of that city by the Romans, written by Josephus, a Jewish and contemporary historian; and the description he has given of this terrible calamity so perfectly corresponds with our Saviour's prophecy, that one would have thought, had we not known the contrary, that it had been written by a Christian, on purpose to illustrate that prediction.

This power of foretelling future events is a plain proof that Christ came from God, and was endued with this power from above.

PROPOSITION XI.—*The miracles performed by our Lord, demonstrate him to have possessed divine power.*

ALTHOUGH the preceding propositions contain very convincing proofs of the divine mission of Christ, and the divine authority of his religion, yet, undoubtedly, the strongest evidence of this arises from the wonderful and well attested miracles which he wrought from the beginning to the end of his ministry. He cured the most inveterate diseases; he made the lame to walk; he opened the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf; he cast out devils; he walked upon the

sea; he fed five thousand persons with a few small loaves and fishes, and even raised the dead to life again. These miracles were all wrought in open day, in sight of multitudes of witnesses, who could not be imposed upon in things which they saw plainly with their own eyes, who had an opportunity of scrutinizing them as much as they pleased, and who did actually scrutinize them with a most critical exactness, as appears from the very remarkable instance of the blind man restored to sight by our Lord, in the ninth chapter of St. John, a transaction which I recommend very earnestly to the attention of my readers.

It is true, that miracles being very unusual and extraordinary facts, they require very strong evidence to support them; much stronger, it must be owned, than common events, that are recorded in history: and, accordingly, the miracles of Christ *have* this very strong and extraordinary evidence to support them; evidence such as is not to be equalled in any other instance, and such as is fully competent to prove the reality of the greatest miracle that ever was performed.

Besides a multitude of other persons who were eye witnesses to these miracles, and who were actually convinced and converted by them, there were twelve persons called Apostles, plain, honest, unprejudiced men, whom our Saviour chose to be his constant companions and friends, who were almost always about his person, accompanied him in his travels, heard all his discourses, saw all his miracles, and attended him through all the different scenes of his life, death, and resurrection, till the time of his ascension into heaven. These persons were perfectly capable of judging whether the works which they saw Jesus perform were real miracles or not; they could tell whether a person whom they had known to be blind all his life was suddenly restored to sight by our Saviour's only speaking a word or touching his eyes; they could tell whether he did actually, in open day-light, walk upon the sea without sinking, and without any visible support; whether a person called Lazarus, whom they were well acquainted with, and whom they knew to have been four days dead and buried, was raised to life again merely by Christ's saying, *Lazarus, arise*.

In these, and other facts of this sort, they could not possibly be deceived. Now these, and many other miracles equally astonishing, they affirm that they themselves actually saw performed by our Saviour. In consequence of this, from being Jews, and of course strongly prejudiced against Christ and his outward appearance, which was the very reverse of every thing they expected in their Messiah, they became his disciples; and on account of their conversion, and more particularly on account of their asserting the truth of his miracles and his resurrection, they endured for a long course of years the severest labours, hardships, sufferings, and persecution, that human nature could be exposed to, and at last submitted to the most cruel and excruciating deaths; all which they might easily have avoided, if they would only have said that Christ was *not* the son of God, that he never rose from the dead. Yet this they refused to say, and were content to die rather than say it.*

Is not this giving the strongest proof of their sincerity, and of the reality of Christ's miracles, that human nature and human testimony are capable of giving? The concurrent and uncontradicted testimony of twelve such witnesses is, according to all the rules of evidence, sufficient to establish the truth of any one fact in the world, however extraordinary, however miraculous.

If there had been any powerful temptation thrown in the way of

* No man ever laid down his life for the honour of Jupiter, Neptune, or Apollo; but how many thousands have sealed their Christian testimony with their blood? *Beattie, v. 2.*

these men; if they had been bribed, like the followers of Mahomet, with sensual indulgences; or, like Judas Iscariot, with a sum of money, one should not have been much surprised at their persisting, for a time at least, in a premeditated falsehood. But when we know that, instead of any of these allurements being held out to them, their Master foretold to them, and they themselves soon found by experience, that they could gain nothing, and must lose every thing in this world, by embracing Christianity; it is utterly impossible to account for their embracing it on any other ground than their conviction of its truth from the miracles which they saw. In fact, must they not have been absolutely mad to have incurred voluntarily so much misery, and such certain destruction, for affirming things to be true which they knew to be false; more especially as their own religion taught them, that they would be punished most severely in another world, as well as in this, for so wicked a fraud? Is it usual for men thus to sport with their own happiness, and their very lives, and to bring upon themselves, with their eyes open, such dreadful evils, without any reason in the world, and without the least possible benefit, advantage, credit, or pleasure resulting from it? Where have you ever heard of any instance of this sort? Would any twelve men you ever knew, especially men of credit and character, take it into their heads to assert that a certain person in the neighbourhood raised a dead man to life, when they knew that no such thing had ever happened; and that they would all, with one consent, suffer themselves to be put to death rather than confess that they had told a lie? Such a thing never happened since the world began. It is contrary to all *experience* and all *credibility*.

It is certain then (as certain as any thing can be that depends on human testimony) that real miracles were wrought by Christ; and as no miracles can be wrought but by the power of God, it is equally certain that Christ and his religion drew their origin from God.

PROPOSITION XII.—*The resurrection of our Lord from the dead, is a fact fully proved by the clearest evidence, and is the seal and confirmation of his divinity and of the truth of his religion.*

THE resurrection of Christ being one of those miracles which are recorded in the gospel, the truth of it is, in fact, already proved by what has been advanced respecting those miracles in the preceding article. But it is an event so singular in its nature, and so infinitely important in its consequences, that it well deserves to be made the subject of a distinct proposition.

After our Saviour's crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea, we are told, laid the body in his own new tomb, hewn out of a rock, and rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre. In order to secure themselves against any fraud, the Jews desired the Roman governor, Pilate, to grant them a band of soldiers to guard the sepulchre, lest, as they said, the disciples should come by night and steal the corpse away. Pilate's answer was in these words, "Ye have a watch, go your way, make it as sure as you can: so they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch." The Evangelist then proceeds to relate the great event of the resurrection with that ingenuous and natural simplicity which characterizes the sacred historians, and which carries upon the face of it every mark of sincerity and truth.

"In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And behold there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his

raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel of the Lord answered, and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus that was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen from the dead; and behold he goeth before you into Galilee, there ye shall see him. Lo! I have told you. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying, All hail; and they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid; go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me. Now, when they were going, behold some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all that was done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, his disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept; and if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews unto this day."

Such is the relation of this wonderful fact given by St. Matthew, which comprehends not only his own account of it, but that also which was circulated in opposition to it by the chief priests and rulers of the Jews. Here then we have fairly before us the two different representations of this event by the friends and by the enemies of Christ; of which the former asserts that it was a real resurrection, the other that it was a fraud; and between these two we must form our opinions, for no third story has been set up, that we know of, by any one.

One thing is agreed on by both sides, viz. that the body was not to be found in the sepulchre. It was gone; and the question is by what means? The soldiers gave out that the disciples "came by night, while they slept, and stole it away." But it is not very easy to understand how the soldiers could depose to any thing that passed while they were fast asleep; they could not possibly tell in what manner the body was stolen away, or by whom. Nor, considering the extreme severity of the Roman military discipline, is it credible, that if they had been asleep, they would have confessed it? For it was certain death to a Roman soldier to be found sleeping upon guard. Nothing could have prevailed upon them to make such a declaration as that, but a previous promise of impunity and reward from the Jewish rulers; a plain proof that they had been tampered with, and that it was a concerted story.

In the next place, supposing the story true, of what use could the dead body be to the disciples? It could not prove to them, or to others, that their Master was risen from the dead; on the contrary, it must have been a standing and visible proof of the contrary. It must convince them that he, instead of being the deliverer they expected, was an impostor, and they most cruelly deceived. And why they should choose to keep in their possession, and to have continually before their eyes, a lifeless corpse, which completely blasted all their hopes, and continually reminded them of their bitter disappointment, is somewhat difficult to be imagined.

The tale then, told by the soldiers, is, upon the very face of it, a gross and clumsy forgery. The consequence is, that the account given by St. Matthew is the true one. For if the body was actually gone (an acknowledged point on all sides) and if it was not, as we have proved, stolen away by the disciples, there are but two possible suppositions remaining; either that it was taken away by the Jews and Romans, or that it was raised to life again by the power of God. If the former had been the case, it could only have been for the purpose of confronting and convicting the disciples of falsehood and fraud by the production of the dead body. But the dead body was *not* produced. It was,

therefore, as the gospel affirms; raised from the grave, and restored to life. There is no other conceivable alternative left.

And that this was actually the case, is proved by our Lord's appearing, after his resurrection, not only to the two women who came first to the sepulchre, but to the two disciples going to Emmaus, and to the disciples assembled together at two different times, and to all the apostles, and to above five hundred brethren, at once. And he not only appeared to them silently, but he talked and ate with them; he showed them his hands and his feet; he made them handle him; he held several long conversations with them; and at last, ascended up into heaven in their sight.

These were things of which the plainest and most ignorant men could judge. It was impossible for them to be deceived in an object with which they were well acquainted, and which presented itself to all their senses.

But there is another most decisive proof, rising from their own conduct, that they were perfectly convinced of the reality of our Lord's resurrection.

It appears that the apostles were far from being men of natural courage and firmness of mind. When our Lord was apprehended, all his disciples, we are told, forsook him, and fled. Peter followed him afar off, and went into a hall in the palace of the high priest, where the servants warmed themselves, and being there charged with being a disciple of Jesus, he peremptorily denied it three times with vehemence and with oaths. It does not appear that any of his disciples attended in the judgment hall to assist or to support him; and when he was crucified, the only persons that ventured to stand near his cross were his mother, and two or three other women, and St. John. They all, in short, appeared dismayed and terrified with the fate of their Master, afraid to acknowledge the slightest connection with him, and utterly unable to face the dangers that seemed to menace them. But, immediately after the resurrection of the Lord, a most astonishing change took place in their conduct. From being the most timid of men, they suddenly became courageous, undaunted, and intrepid; they boldly preached that very Jesus, whom but a short time before they had deserted in his greatest distress; and although his crucifixion was fresh before their eyes, and they had reason to expect the same or a similar fate, yet they persisted in avowing themselves his disciples, and told the Jews publicly, "that God had made that *same* Jesus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ;" and when they were brought before the rulers and elders to be examined respecting the lame man whom they had cured at the gate of the temple, "Be it known unto you all (said they) and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, and whom God raised from the dead, even by him does this man stand here before you all. This is the stone that was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head stone of the corner; neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

And when a second time they were brought before the council, and forbidden to teach in the name of Jesus, their answer was, "We ought to obey God rather than man. And when they were again reprimanded, and threatened, and beaten, yet they ceased not in the temple, and in every house, to teach and to preach Jesus Christ; and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus."

In what manner now shall we account for this sudden and most singular change in the disposition, and as it were in the very constitution, of the Apostles. If Christ had not risen from the grave, and his dead body was in the possession of his disciples, was this calculated to inspire

them with affection for their leader, and courage to preach a doctrine, which they knew to be false? Would it not, on the contrary, have increased their *natural timidity*, depressed their spirits, extinguished all their zeal, and filled them with indignation and horror against a man who had so grossly deceived them, and robbed them under false pretences, of every thing that was dear and valuable to them in the world? Most unquestionably it would. Nor is it possible to account in any rational way, for the strange revolution which took place in their minds, so soon after their Master's death, but by admitting that they were fully persuaded and satisfied that he rose alive from the grave.

It may be said, perhaps, that this persuasion was the effect, not of irresistible evidence, but of enthusiasm, which made them fancy that some visionary phantom, created solely by their own heated imagination, was the real body of their Lord restored to life. But nothing could be more distant from enthusiasm than the character and conduct of these men, and the courage they manifested, which was perfectly calm, sober, collected, and cool. But what completely repels this suspicion is, that their bitterest adversaries never once accused them of enthusiasm, but charged them with a crime which was utterly inconsistent with it, fraud and theft; with stealing away the body from the grave. And if they did this, if that dead body was actually before their eyes, how is it possible for any degree of enthusiasm short of madness (which was never alleged against them) to mistake a dead body for a living man, whom they saw, and touched and conversed with? No such instance of enthusiasm ever occurred in the world.

The resurrection of our Lord being thus established on the firmest grounds, it affords an unanswerable proof of the truth of our Saviour's pretensions, and consequently, of the truth of his religion: for had he not been what he assumed to be, the Son of God, it is impossible that God should have raised him from the dead, and thereby given his sanction to an imposture. But as he did actually restore him to life, he thereby set his seal to the divinity which he claimed, and acknowledged him, in the most public and authoritative manner, to be "his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased."

And this evidence of our Lord's divine mission is of the more importance, because, our Saviour himself appealed to it as the grand proof of his being sent from heaven to instruct and to redeem mankind. For when he cast the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and the Jews required of him a sign, that is, a miraculous proof, that he had the authority of God for doing those things, his answer was, "Destroy this temple; (meaning his body) and in three days I will raise it up. When therefore, he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scriptures, and the word which Jesus had said;" and they themselves constantly referred to the resurrection more than to any other evidence, as the great foundation on which their faith was built.

The reason for this, perhaps, was, that this great event contained in itself, at once, the evidence both of miracle and prophecy. It was certainly one of the most stupendous manifestations of divine power that could be presented to the observation of mankind; and it was, at the same time, the completion of two most remarkable prophecies; that of our Saviour's above mentioned, and that well known one of king David's, which St. Peter expressly applies to the resurrection of Christ: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."

CONCLUSION.

These are the principal proofs of the truth of the Christian Religion.

Many others of a very satisfactory nature might be added; but the question may be safely rested on those that have here been stated.

And when we collect them all together into one point of view; when we consider the deplorable ignorance and inconceivable depravity of the heathen world before the birth of Christ, which rendered a divine interposition essentially necessary, and therefore highly probable; the appearance of Christ upon earth, at the very time when his presence was most wanted, and when there was a general expectation throughout the East, that some great and extraordinary personage was soon to come into the world; the transcendent excellence of our Lord's character, so infinitely beyond that of every other moral teacher; the calmness, the composure, the dignity, the integrity, the spotless sanctity of his manners, so utterly inconsistent with every idea of enthusiasm or imposture; the sublimity and importance of his doctrines; the consummate wisdom and perfect purity of his moral precepts, far exceeding the natural powers of a man born in the humblest situation, and in a remote and obscure corner of the world, without learning, education, languages or books; the rapid and astonishing propagation of his religion, in a very short space of time, through almost every region of the East, by the sole efforts of himself and a few illiterate fishermen, in direct opposition to all the power, the authority, the learning, the philosophy, the reigning vices, prejudices and superstitions, of the world; the complete and marked opposition, in every essential point, between the character and religion of Christ and the character and religion of Mahomet, exactly such as might be expected between truth and falsehood; the minute description of all the most material circumstances of his birth, life, sufferings, death, and resurrection, given by the ancient prophets many hundred years before he was born, and exactly fulfilled in him, and him only, pointing him out as the Messiah of the Jews, and the Redeemer of mankind; the various prophecies delivered by Christ himself, which were all punctually accomplished, more especially the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; the many astonishing miracles wrought by Jesus, in the open face of day before thousands of spectators, the reality of which is proved by multitudes of the most unexceptionable witnesses, who sealed their testimony with their blood, and was even acknowledged by the earliest and most inveterate enemies of the gospel; and, lastly, that most astonishing and well authenticated miracle of our Lord's resurrection, which was the seal and confirmation of his own divine origin, and that of his religion; when all these various evidences are brought together, and impartially weighed, it seems hardly within the power of a fair and ingenuous mind to resist the impression of their united force. If such a combination of evidence as this is not sufficient to satisfy an honest inquirer into truth, it is utterly impossible that any event, which passed in former times, and which we did not see with our own eyes, can ever be proved to have happened, by any degree of testimony whatever. It may safely be affirmed, that no instance can be produced of any one fact or event, said to have taken place in past ages, and established by such evidence as that on which the Christian Revelation rests, that afterwards turned out to be false. We challenge the enemies of our faith to bring forward, if they can, any such instance. If they cannot (and we know it to be impossible) we have a right to say, that a religion, supported by such an extraordinary accumulation of evidence, must be true; and that all men, who pretend to be guided by argument and by proof, are bound, by the most sacred obligations, to receive the religion of Christ as a real revelation from God.



THE
CHRISTIANS' PRINCIPLE
EXEMPLIFIED.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ, writing to Titus, had this saying, 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men ; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.'

As God made man in the beginning, humble, lowly, meek, merciful, pure, peaceable, just, and faithful ; so he would have all men to be. But forasmuch as nothing less than the good spirit of God, in the inward parts of man, can reduce any of us to such a qualification or state, God hath given to every man a measure thereof, to enlighten his understanding, and to guide him in the path of life and salvation ; and this measure, being the free gift of God, is, by the apostle in the text, and in many other places of scripture, called Grace.

In our present age, light within, a law within, Spirit within, Christ within, is the scoffing of some, and little regarded by many, but truly such scoff at and slight the chiefest treasure that ever the soul of any man was possessed of ; they slight that which, according to the testimony of some of the wisest and best men that ever lived, is the only means of our rising from our fall, and coming to live under the government of the eternal Spirit.

COUNT OXENSTIERN, chancellor of Sweden, was a person of the first quality, station, and ability, in his own country, and whose share and success not only in the chief ministry of affairs in that kingdom, but in the greatest negotiations of Europe during his time, made him no less considered abroad. After all his knowledge and honour, being visited in his retreat from public business by *Whitlock*, ambassador from England, to Queen *Christiana*, in the conclusion of their discourse, he said to the ambassador, "I have seen much, and enjoyed much of this world, but I never knew how to live till now. I thank my

good God that has given me time to know him, and to know myself. All the comfort I have, and all the comfort I take, and which is more than the whole world can give, is feeling the good spirit of God in my heart, and reading in this good book, (holding up the bible) that came from it." And further addressed himself thus to the ambassador ; " You are now in the prime of your age and vigour, and in great favour and business ; but this will all leave you, and you will one day better understand and relish what I say to you ; and then you will find that there is more wisdom, truth, comfort and pleasure in retiring and turning your heart from the world, to the good spirit of God, and in reading the bible, than in all the courts and favours of princes." Very interesting sentiments, when we consider from whom they came, one of the greatest and wisest men of his age, while his understanding was as sound and vigorous, as his experience and knowledge were great.

BULSTRODE WHITLOCK was a scholar, a lawyer, and a statesman ; in short, he was one of the most accomplished men of the age. In his retirement, he was visited by a friend, to whom, after making many serious observations, he expressed himself in the following manner. " I ever have thought (said he) there has been but one true religion in the world, and that is the work of the spirit of God in the hearts and souls of men. There has indeed been divers forms and shapes of things, through the many dispensations of God to men, answerable to his own wise ends, in reference to the low and uncertain state of man in the world ; but the old world had the spirit of God, for it strove with them ; and the new world has had the spirit of God, both Jew and Gentile ; and it strives with all ; and they that have been led by it, have been the good people in every dispensation of God to the world. And I myself must say, I have felt it from a child to convince me of my evil and vanity, and it has often given me a true measure of this poor world, and some taste of divine things ; and it is my grief I did not more early apply my soul to it. For I can say, since my retirement from the greatness and hurries of the world, I have felt something of the work and comfort of it, and that it is both ready and able to instruct and lead, and preserve those that will humbly and sincerely hearken to it. So that my religion is the good spirit of God in my heart ; I mean, what that has wrought in me and for me." And after a religious meeting at his house, he was so deeply affected with the testimony of the light, spirit and grace of Christ in man, as the gospel dispensation, that after the meeting closed in prayer, he rose up, and pulled off his hat, and said, " This is

the everlasting gospel I have heard this day ; and I humbly bless the name of God, that he has let me live to see this day, in which the ancient gospel is again preached to them that dwell upon the earth."

From Benezet's Preface to the Plain Path to Christian Perfection.

Amongst the many instances tending to prove the universal operation of divine grace on the human heart, a particular one appeared some years ago, among a number of Indians in the province of Pennsylvania. These people were very earnest for the promotion of piety among themselves, which they apprehended to be the effect of an inward work, whereby the heart became changed from bad to good. When they were solicited to join other Indians in the war against the English, they absolutely refused, whatever might be the consequence to themselves, even if the fighting Indians should make *slaves*, or as they expressed it, *negroes* of them, rendering this reason for it, that when God made men, he did not intend they should hurt or kill one another. Upon being further conversed with, respecting their religious prospect, he who had been the principal instrument in raising them to a sense of good, gave, in substance, the following account. That being by a particular providence brought under difficulty and sorrow, he was led into a deep consideration of the state of things in the world ; when seeing the folly and wickedness which prevailed amongst men, his sorrows increased. Nevertheless, being impressed with a belief that there was a great power, who had created all things, his mind was turned from beholding this lower world, to look towards him who had created it, and strong desires were begot in his heart for a further knowledge of his Creator. He was then made sensible that evil not only prevailed in the world, but that he himself partook much of its baneful influence, and he at last found his own heart was bad and hard. Upon this, great dejection and trouble seized his mind, with an inquiry, what would become of his soul ? in this situation he cried unto that powerful Being who he was sensible had made the heart of man ; and after a long time of sorrow and perseverance in seeking for help, God was pleased to reveal himself to his mind, and to put his goodness in his heart.—He found he was, as he expressed it, raised above himself and above the world, and felt that his heart had undergone some great change ; the hardness and badness he had so long groaned under, was taken away, it was now become soft and good ; he found so much love to prevail in it, to all men, that he thought he could bear with their

revilings and abuses without resentment ; appearing sensible, that as the hearts of all men were bad and hard, till God made them good, the ill usage he received from them proceeded from the same evil seed under which he himself had so long groaned. This sense of the corruption of human nature, accompanied with a constant application to his Maker, to take away the badness and hardness of the heart, and make it soft and good, was what he called religion ; and what, upon feeling the power of God to his comfort, he was concerned to exhort his brethren to seek the experience of, in themselves. And further said, that under this dispensation he was made sensible the spirit of religion was a spirit of love, which led those who obeyed it, into love to all men ; but that men not keeping to this spirit of love, an opposite spirit got entrance in their hearts ; that it was from hence all those disorders arose which so much prevailed amongst men. He was also sensible there was still an evil spirit labouring to get the mastery in his heart, in opposition to the gospel spirit ; but that those who had been visited by a power from God, and were obedient to the degree of light and love he was pleased to favour them with, would be more and more strengthened and established therein. He had also a prospect of the necessity of that baptism of spirit and fire which the scriptures, and the experience of the faithful in all ages, testify every true disciple of Christ must undergo ; whereby through mortification, and death to self, the root of sin is destroyed. This he described by the prospect he had of something like as an outward fire would be to the natural body ; which he must pass through in order to attain to that purity of heart he desired. He further observed, that whilst he was anxiously beholding this fire, he saw a very small path close to it, by walking in which he might go round the fire, and the painful trial be avoided.—This he understood to represent the way by which those who were esteemed wise had found means to avoid that probation they ought to have passed through, and yet retained a name amongst men, as though they had been purified by it. Thus this Indian, untaught by books and unlearned in what is called divinity, through the inshining of the light of Christ on his understanding, explaining the mystery of godliness in a plain and sensible manner—showing that true religion remains to be the power of God to salvation, changing and purifying the heart, and bringing it into true contrition and a submissive resignation to the will of God. This has ever been found to be the effect of its operation on all those, who, by devoting themselves to God, are become the true followers and disciples of Jesus Christ.

CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION,

IN A DISCOURSE

AS BETWEEN

A MOTHER AND HER DAUGHTER.

BY JOHN WIGHAM,



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CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION, &c.

SECTION I.

Mother.—Come, Mary, fetch the Bible, and read a chapter.

Mary.—May I not as well, Mother, get that book that tells about the birds?

Mother.—No, Mary, the Bible is the best book.

Mary.—But, Mother, I do not understand it; I was reading yesterday about the creation, that the Lord God made the earth and all things.—Who wrote that account?

Mother.—Moses wrote it.

Mary.—But, Mother, how did Moses know about it? Adam, not Moses, was the first man.

Mother.—The Lord revealed it to Moses, that is, told him, and he wrote it for the information of others.

Mary.—How did the Lord tell Moses?

Mother.—It is said in Scripture, that the Lord spake to Moses, face to face, as a man speaks to his friend; but He could also, and did reveal things to Moses by his Spirit. Moses understood the language of the Lord's Spirit; he was inspired: the Lord taught Moses many things besides that about the creation; it was by him He gave the laws and statutes to the Jews.

Mary.—Then, Mother, it must be true, if the Lord told it to Moses.

Mother.—Yes, my dear, it is all exactly true, unless the translators have made any little mistakes; for Moses did not write in the English language, and it had to be translated into English for the use of English people; they that translated it might make some little mistakes, but it is believed they have not made any material ones.

Mary.—But, Mother, Moses did not write all the scriptures: are all the scriptures true?

Mother.—Some parts of the scriptures are a history of the transactions of certain people, nations, and kingdoms, particularly the history of the Jews; and some parts are prophecies concerning them, and other nations, many of which are already fulfilled; and they will all be fulfilled in the appointed time, for they were things revealed to the Lord's servants by the Spirit, so cannot fail to be true; and we have no cause to doubt of the truth of the historical part, for the scriptures themselves testify that they were written by holy men, as they were moved of the Holy Spirit. All is true that the Holy Spirit teaches; and though some of the historical and prophetical parts may be beyond our comprehension, that is, we may not understand the whole, yet all that is necessary for us to know, the Lord will instruct us in; for they were written for our instruction, and it was the Lord's goodness and love to men, that was the cause of His inspiring His servants to write them, 'that we through comfort of the scriptures might have hope.' We ought not only to believe them, because they came from God, but we ought to be thankful for them, as they contain Divine instruction; particularly the New Testament, which, above all other books, teaches us the way to eternal life.

Mary.—Yes, Mother, after what thou hast told me, I certainly believe

the scriptures to be true ; but I want to ask thee something more if thou wilt not be tired.

Mother.—No, my dear, it is a pleasure to me to inform thee, and I am glad thou art so inquisitive.

Mary.—Well, Mother, I was reading the other day about Adam, the first man, being placed in a garden, that I suppose was very fine and pleasant ; but he and Eve were both turned out of it for eating the fruit of a tree, that is called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because the Lord had commanded them not to eat of it, for if they did eat thereof they should surely die : the serpent persuaded the woman, and she did eat, and gave some of it to the man, and he did eat of it also ; and the Lord was displeased with them, and turned them out of the garden. Who was the serpent, Mother ?

Mother.—My dear, the devil is called the serpent ; he deceived the woman. He was an evil spirit who abode not in the Truth ; he is also called Satan, the Enemy, the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, and by several other names as thou mayst read.

Mary.—What a pity, that Eve believed him ; I suppose she and Adam were very unhappy, after they had disobeyed the Lord's command ; but did they die, as it was said they should ?

Mother.—Yes, my dear, they did die ; they lost that spiritual life, which they enjoyed in union with their Maker, in which they were alive to good, and knew no evil ; but after their transgression, they knew the evil of disobeying the Lord's command, by which their union with God was broken ; by joining with the wicked one they became impure, and God will not unite with impurity. Thus, they not only lost the life which consisted in the union, but they also lost their strength with it ; and henceforth they and their offspring became inclined by nature to join with the evil. Besides we read, the Lord pronounced this sentence upon Adam, respecting the death of the body ; 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'

Mary.—O, Mother, it was a sad thing !

Mother.—Yes, my dear, it was a sad thing, and a sad state they and their offspring were brought into ; but the Lord in mercy pitied them, and did not wholly cast them off ; but, after having denounced upon them their sentence, for their encouragement promised, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, that is, break his power, and rescue mankind from his dominion ; this was the promise of the Messiah, Christ the Saviour of men, who was born of a woman at God's appointed time.

Mary.—I have read about Christ, but I should like thou wouldest tell me particularly, how Christ saves mankind from the power of that enemy, the serpent, for he certainly has been a great enemy.

Mother.—Yes, he has so, and continues his enmity to this day, and strives all he can to tempt and deceive man, in order to prevent his happiness ; he does deceive many, and retains power over all those that do not come to Christ to save them, for there is no other way to be rescued from his dominion ; Christ is the means appointed by God for the salvation of man, and there is no other.

Mary.—But, Mother, how does he save them ?

Mother.—My dear, the scripture tells thee better than I can describe

it, and I am afraid thou art too young to comprehend it fully; a girl of thy age is not very likely to comprehend the deep things of God; but as thou hast a good memory, thou mayest probably recollect what I tell thee when thy understanding is more ripened. I have told thee already, that the writers of the scriptures were inspired men, therefore what they wrote is true, and we ought to believe it; now it is written that God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but have everlasting life; so that it is the Father's love, in which the Son fully united, (for the Father and Son are one,) that provided the means for the salvation of men, that the Son should be offered up a sacrifice for the sins of mankind, that He should lay down his life for man; through which offering God is reconciled. But it is getting late, it is time to put thy little brother to bed: after breakfast to-morrow, if we are well, perhaps I may tell thee more about it.

Mary.—Well, Mother, do then, for I long to know more about it.

SECTION II.

AFTER BREAKFAST.

Mary.—Now, Mother, thou promisedst to tell me something more about Christ; I perceive by what thou toldest me last night, it is those that believe on Christ, that are to have everlasting life.

Mother.—Yes, my dear, without faith it is impossible to please God, for if we do not believe in Christ, as a Saviour, it is not likely we should come to Him for salvation: we are called upon to believe all that the holy men of God have written concerning Him, and that He said concerning himself. Thou knowest it is written, at least thou hast read it, whether thou understood'st it or not, that He bare our sins, was bruised for our iniquities, and that the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all; with many other testimonies, that it was for our sakes that He suffered: He laid down his most precious life, that He might purchase redemption for sinful mankind: the taking human nature upon Him, and therein suffering upon the cross for us, was a pleasing and acceptable offering to God; who for His sake pardons our sins, if we repent and believe on Him. Now, Mary, this is a mystery not to be comprehended by human wisdom; yet Christ reveals it by His Spirit to those who believe in Him and obey Him.

Mary.—Reveals it by His Spirit to those that believe in him! Is He willing to reveal it to every body, if they believe in Him and obey Him?

Mother.—Yes, my dear, to every body, for God is no respecter of persons; the apostle, thou hast read, says, 'a measure or manifestation of the Spirit is given to every one to profit withal,' and also that 'the grace of God, (which is the same thing,) that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.' And the evangelist John declares Christ to be the true Light, that enlightens every man that comes into the world: so that Christ by His Spirit offers himself a Light and a Teacher to every one.

Mary.—Why, then, are not all men enlightened, and taught to be good?

Mother.—It is said in scripture, that ‘men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil;’ it is also said, ‘Christ came unto His own, but His own received Him not, but to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.’ Christ also told the people that He was come that they might have life, but alas! they would not come to Him that they might have it. It appears, therefore, that though God so loved men as to offer them the means of salvation, yet it is not consistent with His will to force them, but to invite and draw them. It is because men will not believe in, receive, and obey Christ, that so many continue to be bad. There is no defect in Christ. He is both willing and able to save men, if they would but believe in and obey Him.

Mary.—But, Mother, I was reading the other day, where the apostle exhorts those to whom he was writing, to walk in the Spirit; and told them if they did so, they should not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. I thought it meant they should not sin; that would be a nice thing, if one was never to sin. What is it, Mother, to walk in the Spirit?—I should like to walk in the Spirit, if I knew how.

Mother.—Spirit, Grace, and Light, are all the same thing: thou mayest remember, it is also said in Scripture, that if they walked in the Light as God is in the Light, they should have fellowship one with another; that is, live in love and unity like brethren, and the blood of Christ should cleanse them from all sin.

Mary.—Yes, Mother, but I want to know how to walk in the Spirit.

Mother.—Well, my dear; dost thou remember to have read the apostle’s testimony, that whatsoever is reprov’d, is made manifest by the Light, for whatsoever maketh manifest is Light; now thou hast felt something, at times, reprove thee, make thee feel uncomfortable, when thou hast done or said something that was not right; and this is the Spirit, Light, or Grace, that thou feelest to check and reprove thee: thou hast also sometimes felt something sweetly to influence and draw thy mind to good, and fill it with love to God, tender thy heart, melt it into love and meekness and good will to every body: now, as thou mindest these reproofs and sweet influences, and art careful not to do again what thou art thus reprov’d for, believing that it is the Lord’s Spirit that reproveth thee for doing wrong; when thou art again tempted to do the same thing, and resistest the temptation, thou wilt feel thy mind comforted and strengthened, and a secret desire raised in thee to be preserved; and in that strength thou wilt be enabled to beg for preservation. This is, my dear, a beginning to walk in the Spirit, and pray in the Spirit.

Mary.—Oh! yes, Mother, I have often felt just as thou describest, both the reproofs and the sweetness; but I did not know that this was the Spirit, or I should have been more careful to attend to it.

Mother.—We must now go and see about dinner: after tea, I intend to tell thee something more.

Mary.—I shall be glad of it, Mother.

SECTION III.

AFTER TEA.

Mother.—Now, Mary, I was to tell thee something more about walking in the Spirit. Dost thou remember to have read ‘The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit;’ now, these influences of the Spirit, which thou hast felt, but not understood, are the gift of God, and come when He pleases: we cannot command it, but we can wait for it and desire it—indeed the very desire is of God, as is every other good and perfect gift; this is that unspeakable gift for which the apostle gave thanks. Therefore, if thou art desirous to walk in the Spirit, thou must wait for and desire its influence—in it is thy strength; and it is only by the strength communicated to thee through it, that thou canst resist temptations, and overcome sin. This is what is meant by the serpent’s head being bruised, his power broken; and if thou keep to it, depend upon it, and walk by it, sin will not have dominion over thee.

Mary.—Dear Mother, I long for that; but can this something, which I feel stirring within me, drawing to good and reproving for evil, be so powerful?

Mother.—Yes, Mary, though it seem little at first, remember Christ compared it to a grain of mustard-seed, it grows and increases; He also compared it to a little leaven, which leavens the whole lump into its own nature, as it is believed in and attended to. At first it discovers sin, rather than subdues it; makes it appear exceedingly sinful; bringing deep remorse and an abhorrence of self, for the commission of it; lets us see our own weakness and inability to overcome it, and thus brings us to a dependence upon Christ to save us, to have an eye to what He has done for us, and also to His gracious promises, to give us the victory, through faith in Him: and as He has particularly directed us to ‘the Spirit that quickeneth,’ and told us that ‘the flesh profiteth nothing,’ it produces a fervent love to Him, and a great fear of offending Him. This fear is indeed ‘as a fountain of life, preserving from the snares of death.’ Thus we are gradually made sensible, that in this little seed is Light and Life, and out of it is darkness and death, so that we begin exceedingly to love this Light that discovers sin, to wait for and desire it; and as we dwell under its influence, we grow up in it, from stature to stature, till we know it to have the dominion; then the power of sin is broken, and we are freed from it.

Mary.—That is indeed a desirable attainment; I wish I could attain to it.

Mother.—Well, my dear, if thou sincerely desire it, and press after it in the faith, the Lord will help thee; for it is His will, that all men should come to the knowledge of the Truth and be saved; that is from sin. For this end He sent His Son into the world—Christ gave himself for us for this very purpose, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself, that we might be zealous of good works. It was declared of Christ before He was born of the virgin Mary, thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins; so that thou needest not doubt of attaining, if thou cleave to Him, and

walk after Him, in the way that He leads by His Spirit, which thou acknowledgest has visited thee.

Mary.—But, Mother, I am naturally so wild, and inclined to indulge myself in wrong things, even things that I am reprov'd for; and restraint is so unpleasant, that I do not know how I shall do.

Mother.—My dear, thou must be willing to cross these inclinations. Do any of these gratifications afford thee such sweet peace as Christ sometimes gives thee a taste of, under the influence of His Spirit? Canst thou not be willing to give up every improper indulgence, for the love thou feelest for thy dear Saviour? Thou hast read his sayings, that if we love any thing more than Him, we are not worthy of Him, and that if any man will be his disciple, he must deny himself, take up the cross to selfish gratifications, and follow Him; and though we must take His yoke upon us, and learn of Him, who was meek and lowly in heart, yet his yoke is easy and his burden light. In short, I can tell thee, if thou wilt submit to His yoke, that is, the restraints of His Holy Spirit, and abide faithfully under its purifying influence, thou wilt know thy nature changed, and witness a new nature; and to this new nature, to do the Lord's will is the greatest pleasure: old things will pass away, and all things become new, and all things of God—all under the direction and influence of His Spirit. This is called regeneration, or being born again, without which, Christ told Nicodemus, we cannot see the kingdom of God. And the apostle has also said, 'if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.'

Mary.—Oh! dear Mother, what a great work! what a wonderful change! Shall I ever attain to the knowledge of all this?

Mother.—Yes, my dear, if it is not thy own fault; for though thou of thyself art weak, yet help is laid upon one that is mighty, and able to save to the uttermost; and who will save all that come to him, trust in him, and follow him in the obedience of faith.

Mary.—Mother, thou often speakest about faith; I remember thou toldest me once, that without faith it is impossible to please God; I should like to hear thee describe particularly what it is.

Mother.—Yes, my dear, after breakfast to-morrow, if we are all well, perhaps I may tell thee something more about it.

SECTION IV.

AFTER BREAKFAST.

Mary.—Now, Mother, please to tell me what is faith.

Mother.—My dear, faith is believing without doubting, and with respect to a Christian's faith, it is fully, firmly, and steadily to believe not only in God, but in Christ; and also to believe all that the Scriptures say of Christ, as well what He hath done for us in His bodily appearance, as what He is doing for us by His spirit. He is our Advocate with the Father, the Author, Preserver, and Finisher of all true faith.

Mary.—Then, Mother, if I steadily and undoubtedly believe, shall I be saved?

Mother.—Yes, Mary, if thy faith be perfected by obedience; thou hast read the apostle's words, that 'faith without works is dead;' and Christ compares such as hear his sayings and do them not, to a foolish

builder, that built his house upon the sand. And He also declares, that it is not every one that calleth Him Lord, that shall enter the kingdom, but he that doeth the will of His Father which is in heaven—so thou mayest see it is obedience that perfecteth faith, and that without it, faith is of no avail to salvation. It is said, the devils believe and tremble.

Mary.—I see, Mother, it is a narrow way that leads to life; one had need to be very careful.

Mother.—Yes, my dear; thou knowest our dear Redeemer has told us, that ‘strait is the gate and narrow the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it;’ and, that the gate is wide, and the way broad, that leads unto destruction, and many go in it. The disciple of Christ must deny himself, and many are unwilling to take up the cross to their natural inclinations, and yet desire salvation; and the enemy persuades them, they may rest their hope on their faith, that because they believe, they will be saved, though they continue in sin. It is through this stratagem of the enemy, that so many professing believers in Christ are such great sinners; but, my dear, do thou choose the narrow way, though thy companions be few: Christ says, ‘fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’ And can we think it hard to take up the cross for His sake, who has done and suffered so much to save us? and is also still willing to lead us on, as an all-conquering Captain, and if we faithfully follow Him as good soldiers in the spiritual warfare, warring against all our evil propensities, He will give us the victory, and a crown prepared for us when the conflict is over.

Mary.—He has, indeed, suffered a great deal; when I read about his sufferings, I am so afflicted I cannot refrain from tears.

Mother.—Their hearts must be hard indeed that are not softened in reading and considering His great love and great suffering for us. What love, patience, and forbearance, do these words convey: ‘Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!’

Mary.—O yes, Mother, I wish I could be like Him.

Mother.—Well, my dear, I think we may close our discourse for the present, with the resolution to give to the Lord Jesus Christ, our whole hearts, and to do our utmost endeavours to please Him, in keeping His commands; and I fully believe He will save us, for those that come to Him, He will in no wise cast out.

SECOND DISCOURSE.

SECTION I.

Mother.—Dost thou remember, Mary, some conversation we had together about two years ago, respecting Christian faith and walking in the Spirit?

Mary.—Yes, Mother, I do.

Mother.—I hope, my dear, thou hast experienced some growth; and hast made some progress since that time.

Mary.—Indeed, Mother, I do not know what to say.

Mother.—Make quite free, Mary, thou knowest I love thee, and can sympathize with thee; and if I could any way help thee, I would willingly do it.

Mary.—I do not doubt, Mother, thy love and sympathy, but I do not know how to describe the state I am in; to be sure I found what thou formerly toldest me to be true; I witnessed both the reproofs and consolations of the Spirit; and as I carefully attended to the one, I was made sweetly to partake of the other. Many a sweet time I have had, when the love of God filled my heart, and even made it to overflow; so that at these times I have thought I could willingly lay down my life for Him, who laid down His life for me, and that I could suffer any thing to bring honour to the Lord's name, or do good to any of his people; but, for some time back, I have lost these precious feelings; though I seek and wait for Him as I used to do, I cannot find him; He does not manifest himself as usual; I am afraid that I have done something that has offended Him, and I cannot tell what; nor do I know what to do.

Mother.—Well, my dear, it was sympathy with thy tried mind, that induced me to begin this conversation, and I am not at all discouraged, nor sorry to hear thee express thy feelings of poverty of spirit, that thou feelest thyself stripped of what thou most delighted in and loved. Dost thou not remember Christ's words, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' The Lord has ways of dealing with his people, in wisdom unsearchable, and love unutterable; He tries their faith and love by hiding his face, in order to humble them under a sense of their wretchedness without Him; and although these dispensations are trying, they produce a stronger love, and a more humble dependence upon him; and the more the mind is exercised in a feeling of wretchedness, the sweeter is the return of his love, and He will not tarry out of season. Wait for him therefore in faith and patience, and do not embrace, or join in with any other in his absence. Thou mayest perceive by reading the scriptures, that the Lord's servants were always a tried people, and though he sees meet to let them seek water and find none, insomuch that their very tongues are ready to fail for thirst, yet he promises that he will not forsake them, but will open to them in his own time, 'rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys.' Though they may have to walk in darkness for a time, and have no light, yet are they encouraged to trust in the Lord, and stay upon their God; so that thou mayest see it is no new thing that hath happened to thee.

Mary.—If I could believe it was a dispensation in wisdom ordered for me, I think I could patiently bear it the Lord's time; but I am afraid he has cast me off; my thoughts ramble so, I cannot get my mind stayed, when I wish to wait on the Lord.

Mother.—That, my dear, is one thing that gives thee a clear sense of thy weakness, how little thou canst do for thyself; and by which thou mayest be instructed to depend on the Lord for every thing. When He appears again, which he certainly will do, then if thou continue watchful, thy enemies and his enemies will be scattered; and thou wilt perceive, that though of thyself thou canst do nothing, yet the Lord can do all things. The apostle, thou mayest remember, had this in his experience, that though of himself he could do nothing, yet he could do all things through Christ that strengthened him: this is a point thou must particularly understand, that in the work of redemption, the Lord must work all thy works in thee; that thou must depend upon the Lord for every good, that thou mayest be enabled feelingly to give him this appellation, 'The Lord our Righteousness.' When thou comest fully to this

experience, thou wilt see that all the good that is done in thee, it is He that does it; that the whole change of heart is wrought by him; and, that it is by what He works in thee and for thee, that thou art brought into a state of acceptance. Thus Christ's righteousness becomes thy clothing, and thou art accepted in it; this is the wedding garment.

Mary.—I did think, Mother, sometimes when I was favoured with the influence of his enlightening spirit, that I saw clearly with an eye of faith, the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ, and that it must be through the operation of the Spirit, that my heart could be so purified, as to be enabled to serve the living God in righteousness, and be rendered acceptable in his sight; but now, my poor mind is so dark, that I can see nothing.

Mother.—Yes, Mary, thou seest this one thing, that without Him thou canst do nothing that is good, and this is a great and profitable lesson; very likely it was effectually to teach thee this, that the dispensation has been allotted thee. Dost thou not feel more humble under a sense of nothingness than before, and more charity for others? If thou hast not been thus humbled, thou mightest have been in danger of thinking something of thyself. The Lord gave to his favoured servant Paul, a thorn in the flesh, lest he should be exalted; this was uneasy to him, and he besought the Lord that it might be removed; the Lord did not see this best for him, but told him His grace was sufficient. The Lord saw it best for Paul to be true dependent.

Mary.—It is true, Mother, I can of myself do no good. I wish I could do no evil neither.

Mother.—Dost thou not remember, my dear, what was said to the children of Israel, 'Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help.' This is a point I would have thee clearly to understand. The Lord has seen meet to place man in a situation, wherein he can do nothing towards his own salvation: but has offered to his acceptance the means, Christ, who is both able and willing to save him, if he join not with his enemy, the devil, who is ever tempting him, and endeavouring to draw him away from his due allegiance to, and dependence upon, Christ, his Saviour. Man, by yielding to the temptations of Satan, and joining with him, is the means of his own destruction. But, my dear, do thou depend upon the Lord for salvation; pray to Him for preservation, and He will preserve thee, for the enemy is not able to pluck thee out of His hand, except thou incline thyself. Be thou therefore willing, that the Lord should have his own way of working for thy purification; His grace is assuredly sufficient for thee.

Mary.—Well, Mother, I will trust and wade along as well as I can.

Mother.—Do so, my dear, and go to rest to-night; in the morning, if we are spared, I want to give thee some cautions.

SECTION II.

Mary.—Mother, thou saidst thou wanted to give me some cautions.

Mother.—Yes, my dear; I perceive thou hast a thirst for knowledge, and a considerable taste for reading, which perhaps are laudable in one sense, and may be profitable under proper restrictions; but without which, I perceive danger. There is a knowledge that the apostle says puffeth up; this sort of knowledge thou art better without. Christ has

said, 'To know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, is life eternal.' Thou thyself canst tell which sort of knowledge is to be preferred. The apostle bids the Colossians beware, lest they be spoiled through philosophy and vain deceit. The men of Athens were wise, great reasoners and disputers, and they thought Paul a babler when he preached the gospel to them; and that apostle tells us, that the world by wisdom knew not God, and also, that the things that are spiritual can only be comprehended by the Spirit; that the carnal mind cannot know them; and that 'If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.' Thou knowest how the learned scribes opposed Christ. The simplicity of a child is a state much more favourable, for receiving the things of God: the knowledge that God sees best for us, he will not fail to reveal to His babes; Christ thanked his Father, that He had hid the mystery of redemption, through Him, from the wise and prudent, and revealed it unto babes. I do not mean, my dear, to discourage thee from endeavouring to attain useful knowledge; natural things may be understood, by those natural abilities with which God has endowed us. The study of nature will enlarge thy mind and give thee more exalted ideas of the Supreme Being; it will not puff up, but humble thy mind: but what I am afraid of is, that thou shouldst strive to comprehend Divine mysteries by natural wisdom, and reason upon things thou dost not understand, particularly mysterious passages of Scripture. Let these alone, and be content with what the Lord sees meet to open to thee. Secret things belong to God, and He has seen meet to limit man's capacity of comprehension. Striving to comprehend beyond what God intends, has brought many into confusion, in which they have even made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, as the apostle expresses it; and these, in their confusion, have written many books which are unprofitable, and even dangerous for thee to read, lest thou shouldst be leavened into the same lump or heap of confusion. I believe thou wouldst not spend thy time in reading novels, romances, plays, and such pernicious books; but thou must also be cautious of reading what some carnally-minded men would call good lessons of morality. Do thou stick to Christianity, and that will teach thee the best morality. I would have thee also to be choice in thy company, and avoid such as would have a tendency to draw thy attention from seriousness, such as in their conversation make light of serious things; and prompt to indulgences, that the monitor in thy own breast has convinced thee to be wrong. To keep company with such as these, will make the cross seem harder to thee; and, if thou at all yield to their enticements, it will separate thee from that which thou most dearly lovest—the sweet feeling of the love of God shed abroad in thy heart.

Mary.—I am obliged to thee, Mother; I hope I shall take thy advice; I have great reason to do so, for whatever thou hast told me hitherto has been verified. After parting with thee last night and going to bed, my mind was sweetly comforted with the presence of the Beloved of souls; all my doubts and fears fled at his appearance, and my enemies were all scattered, as thou hast told me; and now I have entered into covenant with Him afresh, that if He will be pleased to support and preserve me, I will not think it hard, whatever trials He may permit me to pass through.

Mother.—I am glad, my dear, thy poor tried mind is for the present

relieved, and I hope what is past will have a tendency to strengthen thy faith and increase thy patience, in trials yet to come. Be sure to place thy confidence in, and keep thy eye single to Him whom thy soul loves, and He never will forsake, though He may, and doubtless will, try thee; thou mayest have many sore conflicts to pass through; yet He will make all to work together for good, if thou continue to love and fear Him.

The following brief Memoir is added, with a hope that the example therein exhibited, may be an incitement to others to devote the morning of their days to that service, which can alone confer true peace and happiness.

GEORGE CHALKLEY, son of Thomas Chalkley, of Frankford, in Pennsylvania, was a lad inclined to read the holy scriptures and other good books; and was obliging and dutiful to his parents, and ready and willing to do any service he could for his friends; diligent in attending religious meetings, and an entire lover of good people. He was remarkably tender and helpful to his mother, and would tell her not to do divers things which he thought too hard for her, saying, 'let me do it;' and she, being affected with his filial love and care for and towards her in her husband's absence, would sometimes turn about and weep.

If this dear and tender youth, when reading, met with any thing which affected him, either in the scriptures or other good authors, he would write it down and get it by heart. One passage which he had written down and got by heart, much affected his father; it was the fifteenth verse of the fifty-seventh chapter of Isaiah, viz. 'For thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.'

In his last sickness he behaved himself more like a wise man than a child of ten years of age. He would gladly have seen his father who was in another part of the world, but said he should never see him any more, and desired his mother to give his dear love to him, and tell him, that he was gone to his heavenly Father. He was very fervent in prayer, in the time of his sickness; and entreated that God would preserve his people all the world over. One time, when in great pain, he prayed thus: 'Sweet Jesus, blessed Jesus, give me patience to bear my misery and pain, for my misery is greater than I can well bear. O come, sweet Jesus, why art thou so long in coming? I had rather be with thee, than in the finest places in the world.' At another time he said, 'My misery and pain are very great, but what would it be if the wrath of God was in my soul?' His heart was full of love to his friends and relations, and he took his last leave with a tenderness and sweetness which greatly affected many. He departed this life in the year 1733, aged ten years and seven days.

ON
THE EFFECTS
OF
ARDENT SPIRITS.



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No. 7.

THE EFFECTS OF ARDENT SPIRITS.

TRUE Temperance embraces not only the due restriction of our animal propensities in eating and drinking, but also the proper regulation of every function and action of both mind and body. It teaches to restrain the excesses of the one, and to control the passions of the other. It is essential to our characters as men, as philosophers, as christians. It is absolutely necessary to true happiness;—it strengthens the body, whilst it elevates and invigorates the mind. If it cuts us off from those excesses which the world terms pleasures, it saves us from the bitterness which is invariably mingled with them,—and gives to the regulated exercise of the appetites, a keener relish, and more perfect enjoyment. The arguments in favour of Temperance are of a two-fold character. They address us as reasonable beings, seeking comfort and enjoyment in our physical existence, and desirous of securing spiritual happiness now and forever.

In regard to the general regulation of the passions and appetites, we shall briefly direct our readers to seek for strength from Him, who is ever ready to keep us from falling, that He may present us faultless in the kingdom of Glory.

The object of Infinite Wisdom in creating man with that sense of hunger and thirst which impels him to eat and to drink, was not that he might gratify the appetite, but that he might be strengthened thereby to fulfil his various duties, as a citizen of this world, and an heir of eternity. These he is certainly best prepared to execute, when the various functions of his mind and body are in a healthy condition. This cannot be secured without Temperance.

A fruitful source of improper habits and of disease, and one which bears immediately on the subject we have in hand, is the fear of debility. Weakness or exhaustion is looked upon as the chief cause of nearly all the physical suffering to which the human system is liable, and in the endeavour to guard against it many ruinous mistakes are hourly committed. From various causes—a disease in some internal organ, or from some part of the system having been previously unduly stimulated—the body falls into a state of debility. Now if the means pointed out by nature herself were those popularly employed

to strengthen the system, or to shield it from this weakness no harm, but on the contrary much good would result. These remedies are a plain and temperate diet, a due degree of appropriate exercise, pure air, and proper clothing, in connexion with an unsullied conscience and a cheerful mind. To these, however, the sufferer does not apply. He finds himself debilitated, and he seeks something which will impart to him, present strength. The readiest means he thinks is to take additional or more stimulating food;—some cordial or elixir, or some potent tonic. These are soon obtained; a momentary excitement is the result, to sustain which requires their frequent repetition; but so far from any permanent advantage resulting from their use, the symptoms advance with increased rapidity: the individual becomes more and more exhausted; and, if he fall not a speedy victim to the disease itself, he too often does to the effects of intemperate habits induced by the remedies to which he had recourse.

It is not merely in disease, that erroneous opinions in regard to debility, are productive of evil effects. During health, the same injudicious means are resorted to, to sustain the strength of the system, as are supposed capable of restoring it, when absent.

The infant in the nursery is too often pampered into disease, under the ridiculous notion of ministering to its strength; while every day, the adult, to augment his vigour, or prevent debility—to accelerate digestion, or to guard his system from the supposed weakening influence of external agents,—pours into his stomach a variety of articles, the direct tendency of which is to destroy its functions, and to spread disease, suffering, and debility, through every portion of the body. Temperance, pure air, exercise, and the subjection of the animal passions, are the only means capable of increasing and maintaining the physical strength of the system.

As our aim is mainly against intoxicating drink, we shall now proceed to the consideration of their effects on the physical, mental and moral condition of mankind. In the first place we may remark, that water is the natural drink of plants and animals of every description, and is the only article which can fulfil those ends for which the introduction of a liquid into the human system is demanded. Its use is equally adapted to every age and temperament,—to every season and climate. It facilitates digestion, and, by its fluidity and mildness, promotes that free and equable circulation of the blood and humours through all the vessels of the body, upon which the due performance of every animal function depends.

Hence, in physical strength, in the capability of enduring labour and fatigue, in the vigour and clearness of the intellectual powers, the individuals whose drink is confined entirely to water, far exceed those who substitute for it distilled or fermented liquors.

"If," says Hoffman, a celebrated German physician, "there is in nature a remedy which deserves the name of universal, it is, in my opinion, pure water. The use of it is so general, and so necessary to us all, that we can neither live nor preserve our bodies sound and healthy without it." It has been said that there are certain circumstances, which render alcoholic liquors a preferable drink to pure water. Ardent spirits are supposed useful to preserve the system from the effects of cold and dampness. The very contrary is the fact. Though an individual, while under the immediate excitement of the intoxicating draught, may perhaps expose himself with impunity to a degree of coldness and moisture, which would be injurious under other circumstances, yet when the stimulating effects of the liquor have passed away, his system is left in a condition far more subject to their deleterious influence than is that of the man habitually sober.

The following anecdote shows forcibly the enfeebling and enervating influence of ardent spirits; and its utter impotency in enabling the body to resist extreme cold.

In the winter of 1829, the ship *Tuscarora*, Capt. Serrill, of Philadelphia, on her homeward voyage from Liverpool, was caught in the river Delaware, by a heavy north-east snow storm, and obliged to put into Chester piers for safety; at which place a considerable fleet of vessels had already taken shelter. As the storm was violent, and the weather very cold, it was a matter of no little difficulty to secure the vessels properly. The men were long exposed and suffered so severely, that of all the crews then collected there, not one escaped without having some of the hands frost-bitten, except the crew of the *Tuscarora*. This was remarkable, and naturally occasioned some inquiry into the cause of her exemption from the common lot. Her men had been as much exposed as the others, they were not better clothed, and having just got in from a winter's passage across the stormy Atlantic, might be supposed to be somewhat exhausted from previous fatigue, and therefore, rather more liable to suffer than some of the rest.

Yet there was one individual on board of her, who did suffer. He was not, however, one of the crew, had not just returned from a boisterous voyage with strength impaired, nor

did his station require him to be nearly so much exposed to the weather as the sailors were,—for he was the Pilot.

It appeared, on inquiry, that the crew of the *Tuscarora* had refrained during the homeward passage from the use of ardent spirits,—that the crews of the other vessels had not so refrained,—and that the pilot of the *Tuscarora* was a drinking man!

This at once explained the mystery. It was a most striking proof of the advantage of Temperance, and a complete refutation of the notion, that strong drink is necessary to enable the poor sailor to endure the many and great hardships he has often to undergo.

It has been said, that the use of water as a drink, in hot weather, or in warm climates, lays the system open to the attacks of disease, whilst a contrary effect is ascribed to the use of ardent spirits. This is not the fact. “Rum,” says Dr. Bell, “whether used *habitually, moderately*, or in *excessive quantities*, in the West Indies, always diminishes the strength of the body, and renders men more susceptible of disease, and unfit for any service in which vigour or activity is required.” Dr. Rush very aptly remarks, that we might as well throw oil into a house, the roof of which was on fire, in order to prevent the flames from extending to its inside, as to pour ardent spirits into the stomach to lessen the effects of a hot sun upon the skin.

“I have known,” says the same author, “many instances of persons who have followed the most laborious employments for many years, in the open air, and in warm and cold weather, who never drank any thing but water, and enjoyed uninterrupted good health.” Dr. Mosely, who resided many years in the West Indies, confirms this remark. “I aver,” he says, “from my own knowledge and custom, as well as the custom and observations of many other people, that those who drink nothing but water, or make it their principal drink, are but little affected by the climate, and can undergo the greatest fatigue without inconvenience.” The instances in which sudden death has occurred from drinking cold water, during a heated condition of the body, have been principally or almost exclusively in those individuals who are habitually intemperate. The following fact from the page of ancient history, is a highly interesting and instructive proof of the value of abstinence and the curative power of water. Pomponius Atticus, the friend of Cicero, to whom so many works and letters of the latter are addressed, whilst labouring under that uncomfortable state of the mind produced by disease of the

stomach, became disgusted with life and resolved to destroy himself. This he concluded to effect by famine, intending only to make use of a little water to alleviate the sufferings which would at first result from refraining from food. In the course of a short period of abstinence from his usual stimulating meats and drinks, the pains of the stomach and bowels, by which he had been previously tormented, ceased ; and he speedily felt himself improved in health and more tranquil in mind. He now relinquished his intention of self-destruction, and lived to a very advanced age.

Dr. Beaumont, an American physician, in his practice met with an individual named St. Martin, who recovered from the effects of a gun-shot wound, although an opening was left through his side and into his stomach. By means of this aperture the Dr. was enabled to note every thing that took place during the progress of digestion,—and in order to avail himself of this opportunity for advancing human knowledge, he engaged the patient at a heavy expense to live with him for several years, and become the subject of numerous and carefully conducted experiments. These experiments demonstrate the fallacy of the opinion frequently expressed, that spirits taken in moderate quantity, cannot be injurious, because no immediate bad effects are felt from their use.

On examining St. Martin's stomach, after he had been indulging freely in ardent spirits for several days, Dr. Beaumont found its mucous membrane covered with inflammatory and ulcerous patches, the secretions vitiated, and the gastric juice diminished in quantity, viscid, and unhealthy ; although he still complained of nothing, not even of impaired appetite. Two days later, when the state of matters was aggravated, the inner membrane of the stomach was unusually morbid, the inflammatory appearance more extensive, and the spots more livid than usual ; from the surface of some of them exuded small drops of clotted blood ; the ulcerous patches were larger and more numerous, the mucous covering thicker than common, and the gastric secretions much more vitiated. Notwithstanding this diseased appearance of the stomach, no very essential aberration of its functions was manifested. St. Martin complained of no symptoms indicating any general derangement of the system, except an uneasy sensation and a tenderness at the pit of the stomach ; there was some vertigo, with dimness and yellowness of vision, on stooping down and rising again. He had a thin yellowish-brown coat on his tongue, and his countenance was rather sallow ; his pulse

uniform and regular, and his appetite good. He rested quietly, and slept as usual.

This fact cannot be too attentively considered by those who contend that the stimulus of spirits is not injurious to the stomach or general health, unless where the mischief shows itself by palpable external signs. Here we have incontestable proof, that disease of the stomach was induced, and going on from bad to worse, in consequence of the use of ardent spirits, although no prominent symptom made its appearance, and St. Martin was in his general habits a healthy and sober man. And if such be the results of a few days of intemperance in a person of a sound constitution, it is impossible to deny that continued indulgence must be followed by more serious evils, whether these show themselves from the first by marked external signs or not.

The condition of the stomach above described, and the consequent failure and vitiation of the gastric secretion, induced by drinking ardent spirits, and by general intemperance, explain at once the miserable digestion and impaired appetite of the habitual drunkard; and it would be well for those who are in danger of becoming the victims of the habit, were they early impressed with some of these striking and important truths.

It has been alleged that stimulating drinks taken after a full meal facilitate digestion. To this we reply, that the stomach of a healthy man needs no artificial excitement to action, unless he have transgressed the bounds of *temperance* in the quantity or the quality of his food. And shall a *reasonable* man, shall a *Christian* plead his own degradation, and the ascendancy of his appetites over his judgment, as an excuse for continuing in a practice fraught with so much hazard to the well-being of both soul and body? No: far better, far wiser, far more dignified would it be for him, to refrain from that which oppresses his stomach, rather than to indulge at the risk of his health, in the hope of obtaining relief from a stimulant, the efficacy of which is diminished by every repetition of its use;—a remedy which is in itself a dangerous enemy to the physical constitution, implanting therein the seeds of disease, of misery, and of death.

So much then on the use of ardent spirits. Under this head we have shown that intoxicating liquors disqualify, rather than strengthen the system to endure heat, cold, or excessive fatigue;—that the use of them weakens the bodily powers, and lays the foundation of diseases which cut off multitudes in the prime of life. Add to which, it makes drunkards of

them ;—a name which embodies in it no small proportion of the degradations and miseries of humanity. The calamities, the distresses, the sins which our country daily and hourly witnesses, springing up in the path of the intemperate, are of awful amount. Her 100,000 drunkards are filling her land with crime, and her prisons, her alms-houses, and her insane asylums with tenants, and many thousands of them we have every reason to fear are annually gathered by the hand of death, to the horror of unutterable darkness, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Lost on earth to the comforts of life, the object every where of pity and contempt, the poor drunkard, after watching his blessings, one by one, depart from him,—having destroyed his social and domestic enjoyments, wasted his property, ruined his reputation, spread desolation and distress in the hearts of those he has most loved, goes from the anguish and torment of time, to the far greater punishments of eternity.

Art thou, reader, one of those who are making use of intoxicating drinks? Let us warn thee, as thou valuest the preservation of that reason, which distinguishes the man from the brute;—as thou wishest to retain that physical health and strength, so essential to earthly enjoyment;—as thou desirest felicity at last in that kingdom which no drunkard can inherit;—to turn away at once from the poisonous cup, and come unto Him, who alone can give thee ability to resist temptation, crown all thy resolutions with success, and make thee a glorious partaker of the river of the waters of life. Art thou a Father? endeavour to educate thy children in such a manner, that they may be too wise to seek from intoxicating drinks, either physical strength, curative power, or mental enjoyment. Then thy children may be as the growth of young olive plants in thy path, and not as the springing up of thorns. Art thou a mother? foster not in the nursery a taste for stimulating drinks;—put not the wine cup to the mouth of thy children, as a token of thy love, or a mark of thy indulgence; lest thou shouldst live to see them, by thine own act, made drunkards, and sunk so low, that a mother's prayers cannot move them, a mother's tears restrain, or a mother's love restore.

THE END.

CHRISTIAN MEMENTO,

WITH

OBSERVATIONS

ON

SOME OF THE PREVALENT AMUSEMENTS OF THE DAY.

**"Weak is the excuse that is on custom built,
"The use of sinning lessens not the guilt."**



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A CHRISTIAN MEMENTO, &c.

THERE is a habit in which many are involved that cannot possibly confer any benefit on themselves or upon others, but is an evil example to children, and a grief to every seriously reflecting person who is obliged to witness it. On the public roads, in the streets of our cities, in private parties, among the guests at the convivial board, this practice often prevails to a very alarming and shocking degree. We mean the very frequent, irreverent and familiar use of the sacred and awful names of God, Lord, and Christ; especially the first of these; a name that comprehends all the divine attributes of that exalted Being, who fills heaven and earth with his presence, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain; who sways the sceptre of his majesty over unnumbered myriads of saints and angels. All the blessings, the benefits, the consolations and the privileges we enjoy, are derived from this Almighty Being, the Great First Cause, the Fountain of all good. Let us then bear in conscientious remembrance that it has pleased him to stamp an awful import upon his great and holy, "his glorious and fearful name;" that he has forbidden its being ever pronounced in a vain, useless, or irreverent manner; and has fixed guilt upon the heads of those who violate his commandment: "thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

Some persons seem to think, that *on religious subjects* they are at full liberty to use it with the greatest freedom; but it does not appear that such a liberty has been granted. Our Saviour himself set us a different example, and that too on the most solemn occasions: when he was instructing his disciples how they ought to pray, the prayer which he then delivered as a pattern to his followers and to the world was short and comprehensive; and it is well worthy of remark, that the holy name in question was not once pronounced, but the great incomprehensible Being was addressed by the endearing appellation of father—"Our Father which art in heaven."

Now if the *inspired* Apostles and immediate followers of Christ had set before them, as a pattern, a prayer wherein that awful Name was not used, how careful ought *we* to be, never to pronounce it in a vain and unnecessary manner. Our Lord also instructing his disciples in the great duty of prayer, uses this expression—"Hallowed be thy Name"—which means, *sacredly revered be thy name*. When we approach the Creator by *using his holy Name*, it ought ever to be with deep

reverence of soul; if otherwise, do we not take or use his name in vain? and if so, may not the complaint uttered against some of old, be applicable to us?—"they honour me with the lip and the tongue, but their hearts are far from me."

And if in our most solemn addresses to the Throne of Mercy we are instructed to use the awful Name with *caution* and *profound* reverence, how much more should we forbear to use it unnecessarily on ordinary occasions?

We are also instructed in holy writ to attach great reverence to the name of the blessed Redeemer and Saviour of the world: indeed how can it be otherwise, when we consider that God is in Christ and Christ in God. "I am," said he, "in the Father and the Father in me." "I and my Father are one." And again, "all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." The inspired apostle to the Gentile churches, in his second Epistle to Timothy, says, "let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity;" as though he had said, he who doth not depart from iniquity, is not worthy to pronounce that sacred name. We may often observe that those who make a high profession of Christianity, but whose minds are not sufficiently clothed with awful reverence before the sovereign Lord of the universe, make a much more familiar use of the sacred names than the humble disciples of the meek and lowly-minded Saviour. Doubtless "the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose *Name is Holy*," is often *offended* by the very free use of that awful Name, introduced in a *light and unfeeling manner*, in common conversation, and that too amongst those denominated Christians, his dependent creatures. The commandment not to take his Holy Name *in vain*, implies more than the prohibition of its use in a profane manner: it forbids also our using it on any occasion where it cannot promote His honour and glory. It is said of Robert Boyle, that such was his reverence for the Divine Being, that he never would pronounce that name called by Moses a "*glorious and fearful Name*," without making an evident pause before the word escaped his lips. The Most High hath said, he will be jealous of his *holy Name*, as though he had said, I will not suffer it to be used but for the most solemn purposes.

We should do well to remember the supplicatory expressions of David, the royal psalmist of Israel, and to adopt them as our own—"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable unto thee, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." If under the Mosaic dispensation, this reverent caution was required, surely we should not expect to find a less degree of it under the more exalted and sublime dispensation of the gospel of Christ.

From the instructive passages of Holy Scripture already quoted, it appears that even on religious subjects the high and holy Name may be too freely used, so as to diminish the reverence with which it should ever be pronounced and heard. It is by some, indeed by many amongst the well-disposed, too frequently repeated, as though they thought the frequent use of it would add weight and solemnity to the subject they are speaking upon; but such a habit tends to familiarize it to our ears, and may cause it to fall lightly from our lips on ordinary occasions.

Whatever disposition or frame of mind we speak in, has an influence upon those spoken to, and a natural tendency to promote the same. In proof of this, every day furnishes us with opportunities of observing that the language and tone of affection, excite affection; the language and tone of anger, excite anger. Thence it follows, that if the holy *names of God, Christ, &c.* were never to be pronounced but with becoming solemnity, it would hold out an impressive lesson of instruction to those around us, and especially to the rising generation. They would then never hear the *awful sentences*, "*God bless you!*" "*thank God!*" or the others, pronounced with a light and smiling countenance, or in a flow of cheerful and volatile conversation, which is now too frequently the case with tens of thousands who are denominated Christians. If children are accustomed to hear that sacred name freely used on frivolous occasions at home, how can it be expected they will contemplate, with religious awe, in their places of worship or in their moments of private retirement and reflection, that great and holy Being, before whom "all nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." The candid and considerate reader will not find any difficulty in perceiving the drift and intention of the preceding observations. He will understand the design to be that the *high and holy name* of that *great, eternal, incomprehensible Being*, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, in whose presence *angels veil their faces*, whose *throne is for ever and ever*—a name *almost too holy* for the sanctified on earth to pronounce, should ever be reserved for the *holiest* of purposes.

The Sacred names are also used by many in a manner that is still more abhorrent to the feelings of the religious mind. It is by an appeal to the High and Holy One, with dreadful imprecations on themselves, or to consign to endless perdition a fellow creature who perhaps has excited their unmerited displeasure. This is not only unwarrantable in a Christian, but inconsistent with his dignity as a rational being. Certainly no man of reflection would deliberately call down the

Divine vengeance upon his own head: and it is perfectly incompatible, with the Christian spirit to pray for the destruction of any one, even the most implacable enemy. The Christian remembers the assertion of the divine prerogative, "vengeance is mine, I will repay;" and instead of loading his enemy with curses, he desires that the Holy Spirit may illuminate his understanding, and convert him from his evil ways. Indeed how can that man ask for mercy of his Creator, who cherishes in himself the disposition to curse a fellow being.

We are not disposed to pollute these pages with examples of the shocking imprecations, which are used by some upon various occasions; instances are already too familiar to every one. Swearing puts a man, whatever be his station in society, upon a level with the lowest and most degraded characters; and however the practice may find patrons amongst some who would wish to be considered well-bred, and who may be so in many respects, it bears upon the very face of it, the indelible mark of vulgarity. We would appeal to the person, who seems to expect to strengthen his credit, by annexing to what he asserts, some of those common-place execrations, whether the use of them has not always a tendency to produce an opposite effect. So far from increasing his credibility, they will be likely to lessen it in the view of those to whom he is speaking, as they are oftener used to confirm a rash or doubtful saying, than the simple truth. The man who swears, seems to think his veracity doubted; and well may it be suspected, for how can we believe *he* will be true to man, who so daringly violates the commandment of his Maker.

The use of profane language is irrational, indecorous, and impious. It conveys no useful ideas, it is peculiarly grating and disgusting to the feelings of pious people, and is an open breach of the injunctions of our blessed Saviour. Let those who are in this sinful practice pause, and seriously reflect upon the pain which they inflict on others, and the injury that accrues to themselves, because "every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment." Let them remember what they are doing; against whom their evil tongues are directed, and who is the object of their contempt and mockery. Let them ask themselves what they are to gain and what they do not lose by such a practice. They lose their reputation in the view of the wise and good; they sacrifice their peace of mind, and are destroying every rational hope of eternal life. They are rapidly becoming more and more corrupted, and with this deplorable character, are hastening to judgment.

It will be impossible to escape this day of awful judgment. How important is it then to forsake every thing that renders us obnoxious to the Divine displeasure. The gracious language is, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, and he will abundantly pardon." Reader, mayst thou no longer slight such offers of Divine love and mercy. Hast thou not felt the strivings of his spirit secretly condemning thee for thy evil words and actions? Has he not been in thy conscience as a reprover, and a swift witness against thee, when thou hast profaned his holy name? This voice which speaketh in thy soul, is the Spirit of his Son, the Saviour of the world, whom he hath sent to bless thee, by redeeming thee out of all iniquity. Turn unto it—obey its manifestations, and it will instruct thee to walk before him in reverence and fear—it will lead thee into holiness of life, and purity in language and conversation.

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

To the gay and the idle, the useful occupations of life are insipid and irksome, while for want of some employment to engage their attention, time passes heavily away. To alleviate these feelings, many plans have been devised, which, under the delusive pretext of innocently filling up their vacant hours, are in fact the means of squandering this invaluable treasure. Amongst those which in this specious character impose upon the young and unwary, few are more lamentably successful, or more certainly pernicious in their tendency than Gaming. To say the least of this practice, even when pursued only for pleasure, and in private parties, it is a childish and irrational employment, which occasions a prodigal waste of time.

Locke, having been introduced by lord Shaftesbury to the duke of Buckingham and lord Halifax, these three noblemen, instead of conversing with the philosopher, as might naturally have been expected, on literary subjects, in a very short time sat down to cards. Locke, after looking on for some time, pulled out his pocket book, and began to write with great attention. One of the company observing this, took the liberty of asking him what he was writing. "My lord," says Locke, "I am endeavouring, as far as possible, to profit by my present situation; for having waited with impatience for the honour

of being in company with the greatest geniuses of the age, I thought I could do nothing better than to write down your conversation: and, indeed, I have set down the substance of what you have said for this hour or two." This well-timed ridicule had its desired effect, and these noblemen, fully sensible of its force, immediately quitted their play, and entered into a conversation more rational, and better suited to their characters.

"I think it very wonderful," says Addison, "to see persons of the best sense passing away a dozen hours together, in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards, with no other conversation but what is made of a few game-phrases, and no other ideas but those of black or red spots, ranged together in different figures."

There is, however, something so fascinating, both in the thing itself, and in the company and scenes which it leads into, that it is calculated to engage the affections in an immoderate degree. Hence we find, that those who addict themselves to this dangerous amusement, generally acquire for it a fondness amounting almost to infatuation. This infatuation, heightened by "the love of money, which is the root of all evil," and which is excited in a remarkable degree by this diversion, opens a wide door, and presents powerful incitements to the destructive habit of *gambling for money*; and thus, what was at first resorted to merely for amusement, may soon become the primary business of life. The example to young persons is exceedingly pernicious; for those who have been familiar with cards or other kinds of play at home, and have there witnessed their fascinating effects sanctioned by the example and approbation of their parents, will not easily be restrained from resorting to the public gaming table, which is almost always the scene of riot and *drunkenness*.

How many of those miserable beings who crowd our penitentiaries, and furnish the awful spectacles of public executions, date the commencement of their wicked and unhappy career at the period when they first sat down as partners at the gaming table. It has proved the irretrievable ruin of thousands, who betrayed by its allurements, have gone on from staking small sums, to larger adventures, until at last they have hazarded and lost their whole estates, and involved themselves and their innocent families in the most abject wretchedness. Oppressed by poverty and pinching want—stung with remorse at the recollection of the comforts they once possessed, and which their folly and madness have torn from them—deluded by the vain hope of some auspicious change, they resort to means more avowedly dishonest, to retrieve their circumstances, and furnish them with money

once more to "*try their lucks*;" but again and again they are disappointed, till driven to desperation, they fly to drunkenness, debauchery, or self-murder, to drown the reproaches of a guilty conscience. Thus many an unoffending and helpless family, have been reduced to beggary, while none are really enriched by the practice; for we challenge its advocates to produce a solitary instance of the useful and proper application of wealth thus fraudulently obtained; on the other hand numerous examples are presented, where it has been lavished in the most debasing excesses. In consonance with these evils, it fosters the growth of all those fierce and malevolent passions which corrupt and degrade the human mind. Anger—deceit and dishonesty—intemperance and blasphemy—distressing anxiety of mind—neglect of business—abject poverty—theft and suicide, may be ranked amongst its dreadful consequences.

The pernicious consequences of play have been frequently described in the strongest terms, and illustrated by the most striking examples. Seldom however, have they been presented on so large a scale, as in the late account of the fate of *a great body of gamblers* at Hamburgh, which an intelligent spectator has published in a German gazette, as the result of his attentive examination, during a period of two years. Of *six hundred individuals*, who were in the habit of frequenting gaming-houses, he states that *nearly one half* not only lost considerable sums, but were finally stript of all means of subsistence, and ended their days by self-murder. Of the rest, not less than a hundred finished their career by becoming swindlers or robbers on the highway. The remnant of this unfortunate group perished; some by apoplexy; but the greater part by chagrin and despair. An awful instance, which recently occurred, was related to us by an eye witness:—A youth, under nineteen years of age, of the most respectable connexions, after having by gambling lost his estate, amounting to many thousands of dollars, and indulged in those excesses which usually attend it, rose up from the table—drew a pair of pistols from his pocket, and to drown the horror and anguish of his mind, deliberately put an end to his existence, by shooting himself through the head. Can any man, then, who is sensible of the awful responsibility which rests upon him as a parent, and as a disciple of Christ, countenance an evil so enormous and so dreadful in its effects, even by permitting its introduction into his family as an amusement or pastime? Or can an employment which produces such painful excitement and wild disorder in the passions, and so wholly absorbs the attention, deserve the name of relaxation or entertainment? Did we diligently discharge our social and re-

ligious duties, and conscientiously fill up our stations in the world, we should be so occupied in following the example of our Divine Master, who "went about doing good to all," that we should find no time to prostitute to such baneful purposes.

Dancing is another entertainment, not only incompatible with our religious duties, but inimical to the preservation of good morals. It is however considered by many a genteel accomplishment; and as custom has made it the favourite amusement of fashionable people, its pernicious consequences have been too little suspected.

It would be wise in parents to consider, whether in teaching their children this art, they are not encouraging an improper application of their precious time, and exposing them to imminent danger of contamination. Gay and unthinking youth are powerfully influenced by the force of popular opinion, and readily adopt those habits which are sanctioned by the example and approbation of what is termed the polite world. Captivated by the allurements which this practice presents, they are easily enticed into the society of artful persons, who too often seduce them from the paths of rectitude, and lay the foundation for bitter remorse during the remainder of life. Were dancing abstracted from the company and festivities which usually attend it, most persons would consider it rather as a laborious and unpleasant exercise, than an agreeable amusement; the very circumstances which recommend it to the idle and dissipated, render it wholly improper for a christian; who has the utmost need to cultivate seriousness and gravity, and to live and act as a pilgrim and a stranger. Though private balls and parties, may not be as openly indecent, and as demoralizing in their effects as those which are public; yet when a fondness for entertainments of this kind is once excited in youthful minds it is impossible to predict to what lengths it will carry them. Temptation succeeds temptation—vice is presented under more insidious and alluring forms—desires of pleasure become more and more vehement, and foster the growth of disorderly passions—and when their danger is so apparent as to excite alarm, parental authority may be too feeble to restrain their inclinations. If we take a view of the interior of a public ball room or of a theatre, where dancing forms a prominent part of the exhibition—if we examine into the characters of those who fill them—listen to the conversation which passes amongst the spectators—notice the indecent apparel and gestures of the dancers, and the giddy levity which prevails throughout the whole assembly, we might easily imagine that licentiousness had chosen these for her favourite dwelling places, and decked them with all the allurements which excite lasciviousness or inflame

the passions. Characters the most immodest mingle unreservedly with the chaste and the virtuous—the human form is veiled in a garb so light and transparent, as to shock the feelings of decency; whilst the most indelicate allusions and actions, conspire to weaken the restraints of propriety, and pave the way to the commission of acts, which blast the reputation, and too often terminate in irreclaimable abandonment. How many rash and unhappy marriages, have taken their rise in the momentary excitement and ardour produced in the ball room, and how often have shame and ruin been introduced into the habitations of peace, by permitting a beloved daughter to display herself at a dancing party or a concert.

In vain is it alleged that those who addict themselves to these amusements have but a transient intercourse with vicious characters; the demoralizing effects of even a temporary association with evil, are too frequently, and too forcibly demonstrated, to admit a doubt of its baneful influence. From all this the conclusion is irresistible, that there is scarcely any thing in which we conform more fully to the spirit and manners of a corrupt and sinful world than by joining in the amusements of the ball room or the gayeties of the dancing party. Nor is it a small objection to these amusements, that they are usually enjoyed at those midnight hours, which nature and religion direct to be otherwise employed: and in how many unhappy cases has the sudden transition from a heated room to the cold air, after the exercise of dancing, proved the occasion of disease and death! These considerations imperiously demand that all those who are solicitous for the real welfare and happiness of their tender offspring, should restrain them from this fertile source of contamination. Let them solemnly query whether in teaching them to dance—in taking them to private concerts, or to those public entertainments, where for a small pecuniary consideration, the vilest characters may gain admittance, they are “training them up in the way they should go”—encouraging them to “live in the fear and admonition of the Lord,” and “keeping them unspotted from the world;” or whether they are not rather chargeable with the moral and religious declension which frequently ensues.

We shall close our remarks on this subject with a few selections from the memoirs of Caroline E. Smelt. This excellent young woman, who evinced in very early life, a strong objection to dancing, retained to its close, an abhorrence of balls, dancing parties, theatres, and other vain amusements; and a short time previous to her death, very forcibly observed to some friends—“Let no person endowed with rational powers call them innocent or harmless. How can that be innocent

which leads to a prodigal waste of precious time? How can that thing be called harmless which leads to an unnecessary exposure of health? How can that amusement be innocent which has not the glory of God for its object? How can that amusement be harmless which has a direct tendency to unfit the mind for devotional exercises? We are such frail creatures that we constantly require some excitement to lead us to God, and not to estrange us from him. Will any venture to say that they have been brought to love the Lord Jesus better by having attended a theatre or a ball room? I presume not. I can say, from my own experience, that I never derived solid improvement or real pleasure from either. From neither of them have I ever derived any thing which could afford my mind the least satisfaction in hours devoted to self-examination, nor any thing to strengthen the soul against the terrors of death and judgment. I consider them worse than vanity—they are exceedingly sinful.”

Just before the close of life she showed particular solicitude for the welfare of a beloved cousin, who was absent; and left a message for her, from which the following is extracted :

“Tell her that I desire her never again to participate in sinful amusements. She loves me, and will, I hope, value what I say. Tell her I requested, on my death-bed, that she might never enter a theatre, a ball room, or attend another fashionable tea-party, as they are called. They are all of the same family, let who will say otherwise. If one of them be sinful, they are all so; and on that subject I have no doubt. I generally attended with reluctance; and nothing but a desire to conform to the customs of the society in which I moved ever induced me to go. Silly excuse ! for my better judgment told me better things.”

Oratorios are in some measure connected with the subject before us, and by many they are esteemed more justifiable than any of the amusements previously noticed. As the words of Holy Scripture or Scripture history, are generally used, some persons are allured to them who would not visit ordinary entertainments. But when we consider of what they are composed, and seriously reflect upon their tendency, we must conclude that oratorios are liable to strong objections. The mission and ministration of our blessed Saviour are made the basis of the performances—are set to music, and rendered mere vehicles of idle diversion, often too, by persons of the most depraved characters. Is not this a profanation of sacred things? Is it not ridiculing the offers of salvation, and trifling with the messages of redeeming love? The sublime doctrines of the gospel were never designed for

playhouse entertainments—it is, we fear, in a very awful sense, taking the name of the Lord in vain.

To conclude.—Time is short and precious; we have no leisure for these vain amusements; and indeed we need them not. The gospel opens a source of purer, sweeter and more substantial pleasures: we are invited to communion with God; we are called to share in the theme of angels; the songs of heaven, and the wonders of redeeming love are laid open to our view. The Lord himself is waiting to be gracious, waiting with promises and pardons in his hand. Well then may we bid adieu to the perishing pleasures of sin; well may we pity those who can find pleasure in those places and parties, where he is shut out; where his holy name is only mentioned to be blasphemed; where his commandments are not only broken, but insulted; where if sinners proclaim not their shame as in Sodom, wickedness at least is wrapt up in a disguise of delicacy only to make it more insinuating.

DETRACTION.



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No. 9.

DETRACTION.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."—

This is one of the commandments written on tables of stone by the finger of God. It has never been abrogated. Reader! perhaps thou supposest the application of it was meant to be confined to the enormous sin of Perjury. I apprehend however, it will be found to embrace a more common and less obvious sin, of which it may be thou art not thyself wholly innocent—that of Detraction.

Detraction! that bane so destructive to the happiness of society! who can enumerate the catalogue of evils, of sufferings, of injuries, of unmerited cruelties, that have been inflicted by it?

This is a subject which, there is cause to fear, does not claim the attention of the respectable and well educated, nor even of that portion of society, denominated the religious, to a degree consistent with their respective characters; and what is of greater moment, in a manner calculated to evince their sense of its magnitude, its sinfulness, and its incompatibility with moral and religious principle. It is the *thinking* part of the community, who have it in their power to effect much by the influence of their example, that I would particularly (but not exclusively) address, and invite to reflection upon a topic fraught with so much evil and followed by consequences so distressing, so destructive of the happiness of individuals and of families, and which is not unfrequently the means of sowing the seeds of dissension throughout social and religious society.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Perhaps, Reader! thou mayst be ready to repel the sentiment that detraction may be justly deemed a breach of this commandment, or without due reflection mayst be tempted to exclaim, "I never bore false witness against my neighbour. If ever I repeated what was to the disadvantage of another, it was the truth. I either received it from good authority, or knew it myself; and moreover, I spoke of it confidentially. I therefore do not stand convicted of bearing false witness."

Let it be admitted that thou wert innocent of *intentional* detraction, the truth thou felt at liberty to commit to another, reflected obloquy upon the character of thy neighbour; and if thou thinkest thou wert not guilty of a violation of the commandment in question, thou must confess thyself to have been so of another equal in authority: "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

But the commandment is *very* comprehensive—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Hast thou, who art so careful in reporting *only the truth*, and that confidentially, never given that truth a colouring calculated to increase the apparent magnitude of thy neighbour's fault, or by any means made the offender appear more guilty than he really was? If so, thou hast broken the commandment, for every departure from the straight line of *Truth* is an entrance upon the borders of falsehood; and a representation becomes false witness, just in proportion as the impression made by it exceeds the reality.

Under the Jewish law, it was considered a high misdemeanour to raise or propagate an evil report, to say or do aught that would injure a man in his character or his property; and very offensive was it in the Divine sight. "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off." "A false witness, and him that soweth discord among brethren," are mentioned among those things which "the Lord doth hate; which are an abomination unto him."— — — There are so many shades of turpitude in this prevailing evil, it is not practicable to bring them all into view here; and startling as the sentiment may appear, observation induces me to believe that few, very few, even among professed Christians, have wholly washed their hands from this defilement.

Many I trust have no evil intention when they indulge a propensity to dwell upon the faults of others, and retail what they have heard or seen; but the absence of intended injury will not prevent the sad consequences of a thoughtless, nay more, of a cruel and debasing habit, the desolations and long sustained difficulties inflicted by which are not to be recounted.

Agès have past since the Beneficent Parent of the human family first issued the positive mandate, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a Talebearer among thy people;" yet unhappily to the present day there remain those who allow themselves to cherish and to exercise such a disposition toward their fellows, as would lead one to conclude they had, regardless of the high command, fully adopted the rebellious language, "our lips are our own, who is Lord over *us*?" and who do indeed verify the declarations of Solomon and of David, "There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword."—"They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent, adder's poison is under their lips." There are still those, who, actuated by secret prejudice, and perhaps envy, or by passions repugnant to every principle of human kindness, allow themselves to slander and defame without regard to truth; and well were they described by the Royal Prophet, when he prayed the Almighty to hide him from

those "who whet their tongues like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words."

David had large experience of the sufferings, and sorrows, and injustice inflicted by evil speaking. Solomon, who was admirably versed in the treachery and deceitfulness of the human heart, and who was also well acquainted with the divine law in relation to man, has left many wise and pertinent sayings on the subject of detraction. Indeed, the character of this vice is held up in very strong colours by most, if not all, the sacred writers. Numerous passages throughout the Jewish laws, the writings of the Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles, and the sayings of Christ himself, might be cited, which go to denounce the practice and the spirit of detraction; and many of them to declare the judgments of the Most High against those who are guilty of it.

It would seem that there is a powerful propensity inherent in the unregenerate heart of man, to lessen the esteem of one part of the human family for another;—a seed of selfishness sown by *him* who envied the happiness of our first parents, and sought to bring them down to his own level. Truly, "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Now, can we believe that the fashionable politeness, which those who consider themselves the well educated and refined observe in their intercourse with each other and with the world, is genuine, or springs even from the finer feelings of natural benevolence and kindness? or that those reputed to be thinking men act under the influence of sober reflection, and a sense of justice, or that professing Christians cultivate in themselves, and exercise towards others, the virtues that constitute the Christian character, among which love to our neighbour stands prominently forth, while we are obliged by constant evidence to *know* that detraction is not *only* to be found where every evil plant grows openly and unrestrained, but that even among these it flourishes with baleful vigour?

There is a species of detraction which possibly may not have been recognized as such, even by some serious Christian Professors. Familiarity with its existence among those whom they esteem better than themselves, may have made them think, should they hear of or suspect something wrong in the conduct of a neighbour, that it is but natural, and not incorrect, to repeat it confidentially to another—very cautiously, perhaps, and with expressions of regret and sorrow. But the confidant whispers it to a third, who in his turn deposits it with a fourth—and thus it travels, until an extensive circle becomes possessed of the supposed fact with all the increase of odium that may have

been attached to it by various versions of the story. Mean time, the unconscious and perhaps innocent individual has no opportunity afforded him of explanation or defence. Serious persons, should their apprehensions arise only from what they may think pretty certain *indications*, will perhaps at first feel some care respecting their dissemination; but an opportunity presenting when with those to whom they are accustomed to unbosom freely, and the conversation leading to it, they venture to suggest that a certain friend or neighbour seems to be in a dangerous way—it may be in his pecuniary concerns—in his morals, or in his religious character.—In this case, it is supposed there is no design to injure the individual in the least possible degree, and that, on the contrary, there is real sorrow and regret felt for him; yet an injudicious expression of these very feelings may be the means of subjecting him to a narrow and prejudiced inquisition, give rise to talk and misapprehension, awaken suspicion in minds not sufficiently discreet or scrupulous, and thus darken the otherwise fair character of an individual (it may be a young person dependent, under Providence, on his own efforts and good reputation) with a stain it will cost him much to wipe away, and which *may* go with him through life.

So, also, a fellow-member of the church may be suspected of giving place to temptation, of departing in deed or doctrine from the narrow path, of swerving from a course heretofore honourable and useful; we are zealous for his welfare, but, forgetting the Saviour's injunction, first to tell *him* his fault and not the world, nor even the brethren, till every word be well established, subject him to the same process; and nine times out of ten he is a very great sufferer by it. For, if the suspicion be well founded, he has not received that candid brotherly treatment which might have regained him, and if only the fruit of jealousy or prejudice, many have been alienated from him without a cause, and he, with the church, has suffered loss. We have given him reason to say with the Prophet, of his injuries, "Those are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends;" and with the Psalmist to complain, "It was not an enemy that reproached me, then could I have borne it; neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was *thou*, a man—mine equal—my guide and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

It is indeed astonishing, when we take a serious and impartial view of the nature and tendency of detraction, and see how numerous have been the sufferers by it, how great their

sufferings—and how directly incompatible it is, with the command of our blessed Saviour, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;” and with common kindness or humanity, that it should continue to exist in Christian communities! But that it does, and that its fruits are too plainly evident among us, is a sorrowful fact. In this Christian age, often may the language be adopted, “False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.”

Can it be that we are familiar with the contents of our Bibles, that we peruse and reperuse the abundant testimonies there recorded, against all unkind and selfish feeling,—against envy, jealousy, maliciousness, wrath, bitterness, evil speaking, or evil surmising; and against rash judging, and believe indeed that they were written by holy men moved by the Holy Ghost, and even that many of them are the words of God himself?

Did we truly imbibe the spirit of those sacred precepts, we should be very tender of the reputation of our neighbour, very cautious of doing him an injury, very careful in all our deportment towards him. Even our gestures, looks, and tones of voice, would be guarded; for, by these alone, much mischief may be done, and lasting wounds inflicted.

Sometimes, by unguarded conversation, we are led to conclusions from premises, the foundation of which we have not ascertained, and which, perhaps, only exist in the imagination of the speaker. One for some reason *apprehends* that a certain thing has been done, or is likely to be done. A suspicious and careless hearer infers or understands that it has already taken place; and so reports it abroad, however disadvantageous to the party concerned. It becomes the subject of conversation in different circles, and finally is woven into a tale that passes for absolute fact. Many a calumny has travelled far and wide, whose origin has been as small and unjustifiable as this; and the destruction of confidence and esteem among friends once dear to each other has been the consequence.

We may seek to palliate such indiscretion, or endeavour to cover ourselves from censure, by saying the story was no fabrication of ours, and that we never could have dreamed the mere hint we dropped would have produced such unpleasant consequences;—but how slight a covering for us is this, when, by failing faithfully to repress the first risings of a temptation to break the law of kindness, we have inflicted mortification and pain upon a fellow being!

And is there *no remedy* for this growing deformity, which, like a leprosy, cleaves so closely to the human race? must it continue to invade the peace and mar the happiness of indivi-

duals, of families, and of communities? Would that we possessed a more just sense of the tenderness we owe each other, as fallen and erring creatures, subject to be taken captive by our unwearied foe in moments of weakness! that a faithful watch were set at the door of our lips, to prevent the breath of slander from assailing the innocent, or magnifying the faults of the guilty! "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise."

The proper cultivation and storing of the mind with useful knowledge, would be an important auxiliary in the cause; it would tend to direct our conversation towards subjects of permanent interest and utility, and it would weaken that strong propensity of our social circles to criticize the conduct and character, and to dwell upon the mistakes and foibles of our fellows.

But there is a remedy, an *effectual* remedy, one that would essentially promote our own happiness, while it saved others from the pain which we have no right to inflict.

It is found in the commandments so emphatically enforced by our Holy Redeemer. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment, and the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

This is the dignified mark to which Christians are called to aspire, and it is only in proportion as we advance towards this mark, that we shall be redeemed from the spirit of detraction, and become conformed to the Apostolic exhortation, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another, in honour preferring one another."

Let Christian professors awake to the signs of the times! Let them observe the complexion of the day! a day in which there appears much solicitude to establish views and doctrines adverse to each other, by reference to the Holy Scriptures; and much clashing of sentiment upon various points. Let them awake to the inconsistency of contending for those sacred writings as a standard of doctrine, while they so generally overlook its exhortations and injunctions to equity, mercy, and truth; while they stand in need daily to be reminded, that the Holy Bible admits not of a contentious, a censorious, or intolerant spirit, of jealousies, evil surmisings, rash judging or condemning one another; but requires meekness, forbearance, long suffering, gentleness, kindness.

Notwithstanding all the plain precepts of the Gospel, and a high profession of reverence for the inspired volume, we see

our public prints teeming with acrimony and party zeal, and even men, who esteem themselves followers of a meek and lowly Redeemer, engaged in fierce contention, indulging freely the spirit of detraction, and, with little charity or justice, misrepresenting, judging, and condemning each other. Were the Apostles of our common Lord witnesses of so sad a scene, with what holy zeal and love for souls would they not exclaim, "Brethren, these things ought not so to be!" "Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Let us remember, "With what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." And that this is the awful declaration of him who is appointed to judge the world, "the man Christ Jesus."

Conscious of inability to do full justice to a subject so important to the happiness and well being of society, I nevertheless desire to draw as I can, the attention of the serious to the strongly marked features of the present period, and to sober reflection upon the necessity of greater watchfulness, and of experiencing an increase of the benign spirit of him whom we call Lord, to accompany us in our daily walking, in all our intercourse with the world, and in our private circles. May we endeavour to keep in constant remembrance the spirit of the Apostle's words: "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?"

Reader! in attempting to help others, we sometimes receive help ourselves. I offer these remarks therefore to thee with sincere wishes for our mutual improvement, with a hope that henceforward we may individually try to promote the happiness and peace of society by the exercise of true Christian kindness. "The servant of God must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient: in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves, for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."

THE END.

THE

POET COWPER

AND

HIS BROTHER.



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No. 10.

THE

POET COWPER AND HIS BROTHER.

It is the usual characteristic of minds which have been brought by the powerful operations of the grace of God, to feel "the terrors of the Lord for sin," and through the extension of that unmerited mercy which is in Christ Jesus, have experienced repentance and reconciliation, that they are filled with a Christian love which longs for the salvation of all, and especially of those who are allied to them by the ties of consanguinity, or by strong personal attachments. The early life of the poet Cowper was passed in a state of carelessness and irreligion. The natural proneness to melancholy which his mental constitution early indicated, was greatly increased by the resistance he offered to those convictions for sin with which he was mercifully favoured, and to such a depth of melancholy was he frequently plunged, that life itself became a burden, while the anguish and conflict of his mind created a tempest of grief and despair, that shook reason itself from her throne. It pleased the Lord to work his deliverance from this state of thralldom, by the same means which first convinced him of sin, the secret though powerful operations of his grace in the soul; and as if to magnify its all sufficiency, external means were little concerned in it. The dark clouds of gloom and despair which had long hung over him, were dispelled by the bright arising of Christ Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, exalted in his view as the one complete atonement for sin, and the Redeemer and Friend of sinners. The peace and joy which he now felt in believing, far transcended all the delights which the world could bestow, and filled his soul with the most delightful emotions of gratitude and thanksgiving to his God and Saviour. Having experimentally felt the preciousness of an interest in Jesus Christ, his heart glowed with desire, that all his friends and kindred might become participants in the rich blessing, and for his brother, whom he tenderly loved, he was peculiarly solicitous.

His account of the last illness of this brother is deeply interesting, and contains much instruction. It exhibits the Christian principles and feelings of William Cowper, evinces the fondness of his attachment to his brother, the anxious concern he felt for the welfare of his immortal soul, and sheds additional lustre on his own amiable and excellent character.

But it is not in this point of view only that the narrative is valuable ; it shows the emptiness and vanity of a mere profession of Christianity, or a system of religion built up by human wisdom and contrivance. His brother was a minister of the established church of England, and had received a liberal education. Of strict moral habits, and regular in the observance of the external duties of religion, he imagined himself, and was thought by others, to be religious. He had little idea of *regeneration*, or of the sanctifying influence of the Spirit, and was a total stranger to those deep and powerful convictions of the sinfulness of sin, and the preciousness of pardon through the blood of Christ, which had been sealed by dear-bought experience on the mind of his brother. Cowper seems to have been aware that his brother's religion was too superficial, floating in the head more than pervading the heart, and he longed with earnest desire for his thorough and radical conversion. He strove therefore to call his attention to the *spirituality* of religion, and to convince him that salvation consisted in something more than mere formulas of faith, or scholastic disquisitions on theology. His narrative commences thus :—

“As soon as it had pleased God, after a long and sharp season of conviction, to visit me with the consolations of his grace, it became one of my chief concerns, that my relations might be made partakers of the same mercy. In the first letter I wrote to my brother, I took occasion to declare what God had done for my soul, and am not conscious, that from that period down to his last illness I wilfully neglected an opportunity of engaging him, if it were possible, in conversation of a spiritual kind. When I left St. Albans, and went to visit him at Cambridge, my heart being full of the subject, I poured it out before him without reserve ; and in all my subsequent dealings with him, so far as I was enabled, took care to show that I had received not merely a *set of notions*, but a real impression of the truths of the gospel.

“At first I found him ready enough to talk with me on these subjects ; sometimes he would dispute, but always without heat or animosity, and sometimes would endeavour to reconcile the difference of our sentiments, by supposing that at the bottom we were both of a mind, and meant the same thing.

“He was a man of a most candid and ingenuous spirit ; his temper remarkably sweet ; and in his behaviour to me, he had always manifested an uncommon affection. His outward conduct, so far as it fell under my notice, or I could learn it by the report of others, was perfectly decent and unblamable.

“There was nothing vicious in any part of his practice ; but being of a studious, thoughtful turn, he placed his chief delight in the acquisition of learning, and made such acquisitions in it, that he had but few rivals in that of a classical kind. He was

critically skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages; was beginning to make himself master of the Syriac, and perfectly understood the French and Italian, the latter of which he could speak fluently. These attainments, however, and many others in the literary way, he lived heartily to despise, not as useless when sanctified and employed in the service of God, but when sought after for their own sake, and with a view to the praise of men. Learned, however, as he was, he was easy and cheerful in his conversation, and entirely free from the stiffness which is generally contracted by men devoted to such pursuits.

"Thus we spent about two years, conversing as occasion offered, (and we generally visited each other once or twice a week, as long as I continued at Huntingdon,) upon the leading truths of the gospel. By this time, however, he began to be more reserved; he would hear me patiently, but never reply; and this I found upon his own confession afterwards, was the effect of a resolution he had taken, in order to avoid disputes, and to secure the continuance of that peace which had always subsisted between us. When our family removed to Olney, our intercourse became less frequent. We exchanged an annual visit, and whenever he came amongst us, he observed the same conduct, conforming to all our customs, attending family worship with us, and heard the preaching, received civilly whatever passed in conversation upon the subject, but adhered strictly to the rule he had prescribed to himself, never remarking upon or objecting to any thing he heard or saw."

In 1769 John Cowper was taken ill, and was in a short time so much reduced, that his life was considered in danger. Cowper was sent for to Cambridge, where his brother resided, and he thus describes the state of mind in which he found him.

"In this state of imminent danger, he seemed to have no more concern about his spiritual interests, than when in perfect health. His couch was strewed with volumes of plays, to which he had frequent recourse for amusement. I learned indeed afterwards, that even at this time, the thoughts of God and eternity would often force themselves upon his mind; but not apprehending his life to be in danger, and trusting in the morality of his past conduct, he found it no difficult matter to thrust them out again."

From this sickness he recovered, but in the following year he was visited with more severe illness, which continued with little intermission until his decease. His careless and unconcerned state, awakened the most painful anxiety in the mind of his brother, whose feelings were too trembly alive to the unspeakable value of an immortal soul, and the vast concerns of eternity, not to fear lest death should arrest him, before the

great work of redemption was accomplished. The following extracts will disclose his views.

"On the 16th February, 1770, I was again summoned to attend him, by letters which represented him as so ill, that the physician entertained but little hopes of his recovery. I found him afflicted with the asthma and dropsy, supposed to be the effect of an imposthume in his liver. He was, however, cheerful when I first arrived, expressed great joy at seeing me, thought himself much better than he had been, and seemed to flatter himself with hopes that he should be well again. My situation at this time was truly distressful. I learned from the physician, that, in this instance, as in the last, he was in much greater danger than he suspected. He did not seem to lay his illness at all to heart, nor could I find by his conversation that he had one serious thought. As often as a suitable occasion offered, when we were free from company and interruption, I endeavoured to give a spiritual turn to the discourse, and the day after my arrival, asked his permission to pray with him, to which he readily consented. I renewed my attempts in this way as often as I could, though without any apparent success; still he seemed as careless and unconcerned as ever; yet I could not but consider his willingness in this instance, as a token for good, and observed with pleasure, that though at other times he discovered no mark of seriousness, yet when I spoke to him of the Lord's dealings with myself, he received what I said with affection, would press my hand, and look kindly at me, and seemed to love me the better for it.

"On the 21st of the same month, he had a violent fit of the asthma, which seized him when he rose, about an hour before noon, and lasted all the day. His agony was dreadful. Having never seen any person afflicted in the same way, I could not help fearing that he would be suffocated; nor was the physician himself without fears of the same kind. This day the Lord was very present with me, and enabled me, as I sat by the poor sufferer's side, to wrestle for a blessing upon him. I observed to him, that though it had pleased God to visit him with great affliction, yet mercy was mingled with the dispensation. I said, 'You have many friends who love you, and are willing to do all they can to serve you; and so perhaps have others in like circumstances; but it is not the lot of every sick man, how much soever he may be beloved, to have a friend that can pray for him.' He replied, 'That is true, and I hope God will have mercy on me.' His love for me at this time became very remarkable; there was a tenderness in it more than was merely natural; and he generally expressed it by calling for blessings upon me in the

most affectionate terms, and with a look and manner not to be described.

"At night, when he was quite worn out with the fatigue of labouring for breath, and could get no rest, his asthma still continuing, he turned to me and said with a melancholy air, 'Brother, I seem to be marked out for misery; you know some people are so.' That moment I felt my heart enlarged, and such a persuasion of the love of God towards him was wrought in my soul, that I replied with confidence, and as if I had authority given me to say it, 'But this is not your case; you are marked out for mercy.'

"I never heard a murmuring word escape him; on the contrary, he would often say, when his pains were most acute, 'I only wish it may please God to enable me to suffer without complaining; I have no right to complain.' Once he said with a loud voice, 'Let thy rod and thy staff support and comfort me; and oh! that it were with me as in times past, when the candle of the Lord shone upon my tabernacle.' One evening, when I had been expressing my hope that the Lord would show him mercy, he replied, 'I hope he will; I am sure I pretend to nothing.' Many times he spoke of himself in terms of the greatest self-abasement, which I cannot now particularly remember,—I thought I could discern, in these expressions, the glimpses of the approaching day, and have no doubt at present but that the Spirit of God was gradually preparing him, in a way of true humiliation, for that bright display of gospel grace which he was soon after pleased to afford him."

Cowper appears to have possessed very clear and scriptural views of the spirituality of religion. He considered what are called the ordinances as mere empty observances, unless accompanied with that inward and spiritual grace of which they are the symbols, and all the external duties of religion, however scrupulously and exactly performed, as a lifeless body, unless the heart was animated and sanctified by the sensible influences of the spirit of God. Up to the period of the preceding extracts no radical change seems to have been effected in the mind of John Cowper. It is true his pride had been in some degree softened by the effects of disease, and his spirit subdued by suffering, while his affection for his brother was increased by the soothing and fond attentions which he constantly paid to him. But the strong hold of self-righteousness was not yet broken up—that refuge of lies, the hope of salvation through his own merits, was not swept away. There is, however, cause to believe that the work of the Spirit was begun in his heart. Secretly and silently it had been preparing the way of the Lord, and he was pleased "suddenly to come into his temple," to sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and

in a short period to accomplish a change as astonishing to the one who was the subject of it, as it was delightful to him who had so often and so fervently prayed, that it might be the happy experience of his brother. Cowper thus describes it:—

“ On Saturday the 10th of March, about three in the afternoon, he suddenly burst into tears, and said with a loud cry, ‘ Oh, forsake me not !’ I went to his bed-side, when he grasped my hand, and presently by his eyes and countenance I found that he was in prayer. Then turning to me, he said, ‘ Oh, brother, I am full of what I could say to you.’ The nurse asked him if he would have any hartshorn or lavender. He replied, ‘ None of those things will serve my purpose.’ I said, ‘ But I know what would, my dear, don’t I ?’ He answered, ‘ You do, brother.’

Having continued some time silent, he said, ‘ Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth,’—then after a pause, ‘ Ay, and he is able to do it too.’

“ I left him for about an hour, fearing lest he should fatigue himself with talking, and because my surprise and joy were so great that I could hardly bear them. When I returned, he threw his arms about my neck, and leaning his head against mine, he said, ‘ Brother, if I live, you and I shall be more like one another than we have been. But, whether I live or not, all is well, and will be so; I know it will; I have felt that which I never felt before, and am sure that God has visited me with this sickness to teach me what I was too proud to learn in health. I never had satisfaction till now. The doctrines I had been used to, referred me to *myself* for the foundation of my hopes, and there I could find nothing to rest upon. The sheet-anchor of the soul was wanting. I thought you wrong, yet wished to believe as you did. I found myself unable to believe, yet always thought that I should one day be brought to do so. You suffered more than I have done before you believed these truths; but our sufferings, though different in their kind and measure, were directed to the same end. I hope he has taught me that, which he teaches none but his own. I hope so. These things were foolishness to me once but now I have a firm foundation and am satisfied.’

“ In the evening, when I went to bid him good night, he looked steadfastly in my face, and with great solemnity in his air and manner, taking me by the hand, resumed the discourse in these very words. ‘ As empty and yet full; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things—I see the rock upon which I once split, and I see the Rock of my salvation. I have peace in myself, and if I live, I hope it will be that I may be made a messenger of peace to others. I have learned *that* in a moment, which I could not have learned by reading many books for many years. I have often studied these points, and studied them with great attention,

but was blinded by prejudice; and unless he who alone is worthy to unloose the seals, had opened the book to me, I had been blinded still. Now they appear so plain, that though I am convinced no comment could ever have made me understand them, I wonder I did not see them before. Yet great as my doubts and difficulties were, they have only served to pave the way, and being solved, they make it plainer. The light I have received, comes late, but it is a comfort to me that I have never made the gospel truths a subject of ridicule. Though I dissented from the persuasion and ways of God's people, I ever thought them respectable, and therefore not proper to be made a jest of. The evil I suffer, is the consequence of my descent from the corrupt original stock, and of my own personal transgressions; the good I enjoy, comes to me as the overflowing of his bounty; but the crown of all his mercies is this, that he has given me a Saviour, and not only the Saviour of mankind, brother, but *my* Saviour."

There could scarcely be selected from the whole scope of language, terms more strikingly descriptive of the change which had been wrought in John Cowper, than this short but comprehensive sentence, "As empty, and yet full—as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." All his learning, his critical knowledge of ancient languages, his elaborate explanations of Scripture, his nice distinction between terms, his strict morality, his round of religious observances, his preaching and praying, were all felt to be entirely worthless, because they wanted that life-giving influence which only could render them in any wise beneficial. Emptied of all these, stripped of his own righteousness, destitute of whatever he had before built his hopes upon, he might well be considered as having nothing—nothing of his own—but at the same time, having received the gift of faith in the all-sufficient atonement and mediation of the adorable Redeemer, and experienced his blessed spirit to apply them to his own immediate wants, he realized that state which the apostle desired might be the experience of the Colossians, that "Christ might dwell in their hearts richly by faith;"—and having his glorious presence there, he might well be said to "possess all things."

"It was remarkable, that from the very instant, when he was first enlightened, he was also wonderfully strengthened in body, so that from the 10th to the 14th of March we all entertained hopes of his recovery. He was himself very sanguine in his expectations of it, but frequently said, that his desire of recovery extended no further than his hope of usefulness; adding, 'Unless I may live to be an instrument of good to others, it were better for me to die now.'

"As his assurance was clear and unshaken, so he was very sensible of the goodness of the Lord to him in that respect. On

the day when his eyes were opened, he turned to me, and in a low voice said : ' What a mercy it is to a man in my condition to *know* his acceptance ; I am completely satisfied of mine.' On another occasion, speaking to the same purpose, he said : ' This bed would be a bed of misery, and it is so—but it is likewise a bed of joy and a bed of discipline. Was I to die this night, I know I should be happy. This assurance, I hope, is quite consistent with the word of God. It is built upon a sense of my own utter insufficiency and the all-sufficiency of Christ.' At the same time, he said : ' Brother, I have been building my glory upon a sandy foundation ; I have laboured night and day to perfect myself in things of no profit ; I have sacrificed my health to these pursuits, and am now suffering the consequence of my misspent labour. But how contemptible do the writers I once highly valued now appear to me ! ' Yea, doubtless, I count all things loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord.' I must now go to a new school. I have many things to learn. I succeeded in my former pursuits. I wanted to be highly applauded ; and I was so. I was flattered up to the height of my wishes ; now, I must learn a new lesson.' "

With peculiar propriety may we say of many young persons at the present period, that they " labour night and day to perfect themselves in things of no profit, even sacrificing health to those pursuits," which are of comparatively trivial moment. To say nothing of the sinful waste of time and health in dress and company, and the slavish devotion to getting money ; how many are inordinately pursuing after science and literature, to the almost total exclusion of every thing like religious thoughtfulness ! The acquisition of useful knowledge, and the cultivation of those talents with which a wise and beneficent Creator has endowed us, are certainly laudable when kept within proper limits. But if suffered to engross the mind, and divert it from attention to the infinitely more important concerns of religion, they then become criminal ; and those who fall into this temptation, though they may reap the laurels of human applause, and rejoice in having their names recorded as the patrons of literature and the friends of science ; yet one day they will have, with the subject of this memoir, to make the mournful and humiliating acknowledgment, "*I have been building my glory on a sandy foundation.*"

" On the evening of the 13th, he said, ' What comfort have I in this bed, miserable as I seem to be. Brother, I love to look at you. I see now who was right, and who was mistaken. But it seems wonderful, that such a dispensation should be necessary to enforce what seems so very plain. I wish myself at Olney ; you have a good river there, better than all the rivers of Damascus. What a scene is passing before me ! Ideas upon these subjects

crowd upon me faster than I can give them utterance. How plain do many texts appear, to which, after consulting all the commentators, I should hardly affix a meaning; and now I have their true meaning without any comment at all. There is but one key to the New Testament: there is but one interpreter. I cannot describe to you, nor shall ever be able to describe, what I felt in the moment when it was given to me. May I make a good use of it! How I shudder when I think of the danger I have just escaped. I had made up my mind upon these subjects, and was determined to hazard all upon the justness of my own opinions."

When Christianity is stripped of the trappings with which human wisdom and invention have disfigured it, it presents the same lovely and simple aspect under every profession. That there is but "one key" and "one interpreter" to the Holy Scriptures, is a truth which is sealed in the practical experience of every spiritually-minded disciple of Jesus. How wonderful and convincing are the Spirit's teachings. Under its holy enlightening influences, things previously dark and abstruse are made plain and easy, passages which learned commentators have in vain puzzled themselves to reconcile or expound, receive their true meaning, and the beauty, harmony and sublimity of the Bible, are seen in all their intrinsic lustre. Why then should the professors of the name of Christ be so slow in receiving a doctrine fraught with such rich and precious advantages, and which is engraven with clearness and precision on the page of written revelation.

"Speaking of his illness, he said, he had been followed night and day from the very beginning of it with this text: *I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord*. This notice was fulfilled to him, though not in such a sense as my desire of his recovery prompted me to put upon it. His remarkable amendment soon appeared to be no more than a present supply of strength and spirits, that he might be able to speak of the better life which God had given him, which was no sooner done than he relapsed as suddenly as he had revived.

"His experience was rather peace than joy, if a distinction may be made between joy and that heart-felt peace which he often spoke of in the most comfortable terms; and which he expressed by a heavenly smile upon his countenance under the bitterest bodily distress. His words upon this subject once were these:—'How wonderful is it, that God should look upon man, especially that he should look upon *me*!' Yet he sees me, and takes notice of all that I suffer. I see him too; he is present before me, and I hear him say, *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*' Matt. xi. 28. On the fourteenth, in the afternoon, I perceived that the strength and spirits which had been afforded him, were suddenly withdrawn, so

that by the next day his mind became weak, and his speech roving and faltering. But still, at intervals, he was enabled to speak of divine things with great force and clearness. On the evening of the 15th, he said, 'There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. That text has been sadly misunderstood, by me, as well as by others. Where is that just person to be found? Alas, what must have become of me if I had died this day seven-night? What should I have had to plead? My own righteousness? *That* would have been of great service to me, to be sure. Well, whither next? Why, to the mountains to fall upon us, and to the hills to cover us. I am not duly thankful for the mercy I have received. Perhaps I may ascribe some part of my insensibility to my great weakness of body. I hope at least, that, if I was better in health, it would be better with me in these respects also.

"The next day, perceiving that his understanding began to suffer by the extreme weakness of his body, he said: 'I have been vain of my understanding and of my acquirements in this place; and now God has made me little better than an idiot, as much as to say, Now be proud if you can. Well, while I have any senses left, my thoughts will be poured out in the praise of God. I have an interest in Christ, in his blood and sufferings, and my sins are forgiven me. Have I not cause to praise him? When my understanding fails me quite, as I think it will soon, then he will pity my weakness.'"

His deep conviction of the hatefulness of sin, and the corruptions and hardness of his own heart, often brought him low, and made him almost doubt whether his change could be real, or whether the peace and joy which he felt were not the effect of delusion. But these moments of doubt and conflict were succeeded by the renewal of those consolations which are in Christ Jesus, and that assurance of pardon and reconciliation which can only be realized by the sincere believer in his atonement, and in that redemption which is wrought by his spirit.

"'I see myself odiously vile and wicked. If I die in this illness, I beg you will place no other inscription over me than such as may just mention my name and the parish where I was minister; for that I ever had a being, and what sort of a being I had, cannot be too soon forgot. I was just beginning to be a deist, and had long desired to be so; and I will own to you what I never confessed before, that my function and the duties of it were a weariness to me which I could not bear. Yet, wretched creature as I was, I was esteemed religious, though I lived without God in the world.' About this time I reminded him of the account of *Jane-way's*, which he once read at my desire. He said he had laughed at

it in his own mind, and accounted it more madness and folly ; ' Yet base as I am,' said he, ' I have no doubt now but God has accepted me also, and forgiven me all my sins.'

" In a time of severe and continual pain, he smiled in my face, and said, ' Brother, I am as happy as a king.' The day before he died, when I asked him what sort of a night he had had, he replied, ' A sad night, not a wink of sleep.' I said, ' Perhaps, though, your mind has been composed, and you have been enabled to pray.' ' Yes,' said he, ' I have endeavoured to spend the hours in the thoughts of God and prayer ; I have been much comforted, and all the comfort I got came to me in this way.'

" The next morning I was called up to be witness of his last moments. The Lord, in whose sight the death of his saints is precious, cut short his sufferings, and gave him a speedy and peaceful departure.

" He died at seven in the morning, on the 20th of March, 1770."

RELIGIOUS DUTIES,

CONSISTING CHIEFLY OF

EXTRACTS

FROM

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.



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No. 11.

RELIGIOUS DUTIES.

CHAP. I.

On Faith and Hope in God.

THE first duty which we owe to the Divine Being, is Faith ; or, a belief in the existence of God, in his power, and in his goodness. It is called Faith, because these great and important truths do not admit of that kind of demonstration by which many other truths may be proved ; and yet all around us, and all within us, so fully evince the existence, the power, and the goodness, of a Divine Being, that this may be considered a just and reasonable duty. On a subject so much above our comprehension, we must be content in some degree, to walk by faith, and not by sight. We need not, therefore, stumble at this first principle of religion, to which our implicit acquiescence is required. "Without faith it is impossible to please God ; for he that cometh unto him, must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of all those that diligently seek him." When these principles have their proper influence on the heart, they are of great service to us in our passage through life ; and tend greatly to reconcile our minds to those various circumstances, which are by an all-wise Providence, permitted or dispensed to us. It is by the eye of faith that we see Him, who is, to every other eye, invisible ; and by this eye of faith we are enabled to look beyond the things which are seen, and are temporal, to those things which are not seen, and are eternal. It was under the influence of this faith, that "Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin ; seeing him who is invisible, and having an eye to the recompense of reward."

From faith in the Divine Being and Providence proceeds that "Hope which is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast." In the storms and tempests attendant on this probationary state of existence, an humble hope and trust in the mercies and providence of God, are essentially necessary to the preservation of the vessel, from being driven on the rocks or quicksands which surround our coast ; and on which shipwreck is sometimes made of every thing that renders life valuable, or eternity desirable.

This hope or trust may be divided into two parts ; first, as it relates to the providence of God, in reference to the things of this life ; and secondly, as it relates to his mercy in respect to those things which pertain to that life which is to come. With respect to the first, our blessed Lord strengthens his disciples in their confidence in the Divine Providence, by many apt allusions and pressing exhortations : "I say unto you, take no thought, or rather, be not anxious, for your life, what ye shall

eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Consider the lilies how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." We have in the prophet Habakkuk an eminent instance of resignation to Divine protection, and of confidence therein. After foreseeing some impending calamities, he expresses himself in this animated and animating language: "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

It sometimes happens that religiously disposed minds fall into a state of depression and discouragement, respecting their inward or their future state. This, so far as it excites vigilance and exertion, may be beneficial; but when its tendency is to lead to despair of the mercies of God, and to cast away our confidence in his goodness and loving kindness, it becomes a disposition to which we ought not to give way, but should carefully guard against its attacks. This situation of mind is strongly described by the Psalmist in the seventy-seventh Psalm; "In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my* hand was stretched out in the night and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Will the Lord cast off forever; will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Here the Psalmist seems to recollect his own peculiar weakness, and turns his reflections another way. "I said, this is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God! is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God?" In another Psalm, we find the pious David consoling himself in this encouraging soliloquy: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise

* See the marginal reading.

nim who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Here we see the benefit of attending to that apostolic exhortation: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

The following passages point out the necessity and advantages of a proper trust or confidence in God, on all occasions: "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thy own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. Commit thy way unto him, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. Judgment is before him, therefore trust thou in him."

CHAP. II.

On the Love of God.

When we consider the attributes which are ascribed to the Divine Being, and the relation in which we stand to him, nothing can be more reasonable, nothing more becoming that relation, than the tribute of love: it is a disposition of mind which we ought peculiarly to cultivate, as being in an especial manner, connected both with our duty and happiness. When this feeling predominates in the mind, those religious restraints which are aptly described by "the yoke of Christ" become easy, and his burden is made light. The ways of righteousness come to be "ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace."

When our Saviour was insidiously asked; "which is the great commandment of the law?" the reply was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." Did we place this duty sufficiently before us, as the most desirable object of our attainment, and frequently examine ourselves respecting it; considering at the same time the many reasonable motives which we have for fulfilling it; we should be likely to witness an increase of this love in our hearts, and feelingly to unite with the expressions of Holy Writ: "I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold. Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it. Oh! love the Lord, all ye saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Let them that love thy name be joyful in thee, for thou, Lord! wilt bless the righteous. Let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified. The Lord preserveth all them that love him."

But of all the inducements to the love of God, there is none so powerful as that which the apostle mentions: "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ

died for us." In the enjoyment of this consoling faith, Christians can say, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Such was the prevalence and the establishment of this love in the heart of the apostle, and some of his fellow-believers, that he could confidently declare: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The principal proof of our love, arises from our obedience to what we know to be the Divine will concerning us, or his commandments, to us. "If ye love me," says our Saviour, "keep my commandments." Consistent with this language, is that of the apostle John: "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous."

In order to guard us against the loss of that love, which is so important a part of our duty, the following advices and cautions are given; "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth; love not the world, neither the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are not of the Father, but of the world. The world passeth away and the lust thereof: whosoever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God, for the friendship of the world, is enmity with God." Let not these interesting cautions and observations be forgotten; and then the following salutations of the apostle may be verified in our experience: "The Lord direct your hearts unto the love of God, and unto the patient waiting for Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

CHAP. III.

On the Fear of God.

The next duty which we owe to the Divine Being, and which may probably be considered by many as previous to that of love, is the fear of offending Him. This has been, in all ages, the disposition of the righteous, by which they have been in a great measure, preserved from falling into those irreligious and immoral practices, which draw down Divine displeasure on men. When we consider the Omnipotence, the Omniscience, and the Justice of God, we shall find abundant cause for cherishing this Fear, accompanied with an awful reverence of spirit towards him. So forcibly was this duty impressed on the mind of one of the Patriarchs, that the Divine Being was styled, "The Fear

of Isaac." Joseph was an eminent example of the beneficial effects of this fear. He says of himself, "I fear God;" and he gave a striking proof of it, when, under a peculiar temptation, he resisted it with this memorable language, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

When we attend to all the beneficial consequences which are described in Scripture, as the result of this virtue, its importance must forcibly impress our minds, and should stimulate us to the attainment of it. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God," was a precept early given to the Jewish nation, and was added to many of their legal institutions, as an incentive to duty. In the book of Job, we have a grand description of the inestimable value of true wisdom; which is, after all that is said of it, reduced to this simple, but important point: "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, is understanding." Solomon concludes his no less fine description of wisdom in similar words. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding." In this description of wisdom, he also says: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate." Again, "By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil. It is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are riches, and honour, and life."

The Psalmist inculcates the Divine fear, in this inviting language: "Come, ye Children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." We have many other incitements to this duty in the Scriptures; particularly in the Psalms: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. He is to be feared above all gods. Thou, even thou, O God of Jacob! art to be feared; and who may stand in thy sight, when once thou art angry? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Stand in awe, and sin not. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble. He sitteth between the Cherubim, let the earth be moved. Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations! for to thee doth it appertain."

But in the Holy Scriptures, Christians are taught whom they

should not fear, as well as whom they should fear. "Ye shall not fear other gods. Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of Heaven; for the customs of the people are vain. The fear of man bringeth a snare. Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of a man **which** shall be made as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth?"

Our blessed Redeemer gave his disciples some particular instructions on this subject; "I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear. Fear him, who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear Him."

Thus we find in every dispensation the fear of God was a necessary attainment. It formed a prominent part in that message delivered by the angel, who was seen to fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth; saying with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgments is come; and worship Him that made heaven and earth; and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

CHAP. IV.

On Religious Meditation.

By Religious Meditation, is meant that inward retirement of mind, from the cares and concerns of this world, in which we may contemplate the works of God, both in creation and redemption; and consider the duties which we owe to him, and one to another.

To have the mind frequently engaged in this manner, is of no small importance to the religious improvement of a Christian. For this purpose, as well as for that of inward retirement and private prayer, some persons set apart particular times of the day; whilst others find it practicable when they are engaged in their outward employments, inwardly to retire from the world's concerns, secretly to meditate upon the law of the Lord, to wait upon him for the renewal of their spiritual strength, and to pour out their supplications unto him. To prescribe the mode of performing these duties, is not my business; and indeed it is a point in which we cannot well prescribe one for another. That they are duties, important and beneficial, will, no doubt, be generally admitted: and we have reason to believe, that they have

been practised by the righteous of all generations. We are told that Enoch walked with God; and we may reasonably suppose, that this was by secret communion with him, and meditation upon his works and commands.

Of religious meditation, we have an example in the case of Isaac; and from the incidental mention of his "going into the field at eventide to meditate," a presumptive proof, at least, is afforded, that a similar practice was not uncommon with the Patriarchs. To Joshua, the successful leader of the children of Israel into the promised land, this command was given: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." We have but little left on record in the Scriptures, of the private, religious exercises of those concerning whom they are written, previously to the Book of Psalms. Here we find in the first Psalm, religious meditation represented as a material part of the employment of the man who is styled blessed. "His delight, says the Psalmist, is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." It was, no doubt, to this duty, that the Psalmist alluded, when he gave this exhortation: "Commune with your own heart upon your bed; and be still." The benefits which result from religious meditation are thus described "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches." Again we find this employment excellently and profitably illustrated, and its benefits under close conflicts strongly described: "I have considered the days of old; the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night, and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more?" After various considerations of this kind, the Psalmist concludes in this manner: "Surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: Who is so great a God as our God?"

But the inspired writers did not confine their meditation to the law of their God, or to his providential dealings with his people. They saw him, and they adored him, in the works of creation. From these they drew many beautiful similes, and inculcated much important and humbling instruction. "The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." Again, "When I consider thy

heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, I exclaim, What is man that thou art mindful of him ; or the son of man, that thou visitest him !”

Our duties also afford very copious subjects for our meditation. Thus the apostle Paul enumerates many particulars of a very comprehensive nature, and recommends them to the contemplation of his favourite Philippians : “ Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.” To this exhortation he adds these memorable words : “ Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do ; and the God of peace shall be with you.”

CHAP. V.

Watchfulness and Waiting upon God.

These duties are intimately connected with each other. Watchfulness is an exercise of the mind, in which we are concerned to guard against the approach and attack of evil, on the one hand ; and on the other to be looking for, and ready to receive the communication of Divine good to the soul. The last may be termed, waiting upon God. This expression may also be applied to a dependence on the Divine care and bounty, for the supply of our spiritual and temporal wants ; and patiently waiting the Lord’s time for this supply.

When we consider how we are surrounded in this world by temptations to evil ; how much our own propensities incline us to comply with it ; and that, in addition to these inducements there is also an unwearied enemy and evil spirit, who is seeking our destruction ; watchfulness will appear to be an indispensable duty. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are all represented in Holy Writ as enemies, against which it is necessary to be upon our guard. “ The world lieth in wickedness, and its friendship is enmity with God. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit ;” and so powerful is that enemy, who has these weapons to war with against our happiness, that an apostle formerly gave this important exhortation to the early believers : “ Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour.” When these considerations have taken place in our minds, we shall be convinced of the propriety of that universal command given by our blessed Saviour : “ What I say unto you, I say unto all ; watch.” Again, “ Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.” Thus also the apostles : “ Watch ye, stand fast in the faith ; quit you like men, be strong.

Let us watch and be sober. Be ye sober, and watch unto prayer."

The truly humble-minded Christian, is frequently brought to feel his own incapacity for every good word and work. He is often made sensible of that important truth inculcated by his Divine Master: "No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me, draw him." From this sense and feeling, he finds the necessity of patiently waiting upon God for health and strength in the performance of his religious duties. The benefit of this state of mind, is frequently described in Holy Writ, and its duty strongly enforced: "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." Again, "I waited patiently on the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay; and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings; and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. Many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Thus does the royal Psalmist describe the beneficial consequences of waiting upon God, and Solomon represents wisdom, no doubt the wisdom which is from above, speaking in this manner: "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."

The prophet Habakkuk appears to have been sensible of the importance of this duty, both for his own particular benefit, and for the fulfilment of his prophetic office: "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see, what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." In this state of mind he received the Divine communication and commission, to "write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Thus also we find the apostles were commanded by their Heavenly Master, previously to their entering on their apostolical office, "to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father; which," saith he, "ye have heard of me."

I shall conclude this subject with the lively description given by the evangelical prophet, of the benefits arising from this exercise of mind: "Even the youths shall faint and grow weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

CHAP. VI.

On Prayer.

Of all the duties which Religion requires, there is not one more clearly obligatory, or more interestingly important, than

that of Prayer ; by which it is scarcely necessary to say, is meant, the making our requests known to God, for those things of which we stand in need, whether temporal or spiritual. This is a duty which we may be said to owe to ourselves as well as to God. When we consider our manifold wants, our infirmities, and our dangers, with our incapacity to supply or relieve ourselves ; and when we reflect, that the Divine Being alone is capable of affording us that supply and assistance, which are necessary for our present and future well-being ; the importance of this duty to ourselves, or for our own benefit must be obvious. Again, when we consider, that God is the giver of every good and perfect gift ; that the earth is his, and the fulness thereof ; that in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ; these considerations show, that prayer is a duty which we owe to his omnipotence and goodness : but in addition to these reasonable considerations, the commands which are given us in the Holy Scriptures, impose prayer upon us, as being indispensably due to the Almighty. We have various precepts and examples, respecting this duty, in the Old Testament ; all tending to incite us to “ lift up our hearts with our hands to God in the Heavens : ” but in the New Testament the directions are more full and particular. Our blessed Lord inculcated this duty very forcibly among his disciples : and we are told, “ that he spake a parable to them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” The apostle Paul is very earnest in his injunctions on this head : “ Be careful, or anxious, for nothing ; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Pray without ceasing. I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting : that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men ; for kings and for those that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty ; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour.”

But there are some circumstances necessary to be attended to, in order to make our prayers acceptable, and such as will be likely to procure a favourable answer to them. The first of these is, sincerity of heart, in the abhorrence of sin, and in desires after holiness and purity. Of this the Psalmist appears to have been fully sensible, when he says, “ If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Again, “ I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I encompass thy altar, O God ! ” Solomon also makes a memorable observation on this subject : “ He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination to the Lord.” In another place

he says, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight." In the answer which the young man who had been blind, made to the cavilling Jews, we have an instructive remark on the qualification for true prayer: "We know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." The apostle John also inculcates a similar doctrine: "Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God: and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

The direction and caution which were given by our Saviour on this subject, should also be remembered, in order to avoid that ostentatious disposition which mars, in the sight of God, all our otherwise good words and works: "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet: and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father, who is in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

Our Lord having thus cautioned his disciples against a desire to be seen and praised of men, proceeds to correct another false apprehension which some had entertained, that they should be heard for their much speaking. Of this notion he exposes the folly; and, in order to exemplify the doctrine which he taught, he gives his disciples a most comprehensive, and at the same time concise, specimen of prayer.

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come: thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

On one part of this excellent prayer, our blessed Lord makes a short comment, to show the importance of a disposition of mind, which, through Divine grace, it is in our power, and is certainly our duty, to attain. "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Of how great importance is this duty of forgiveness? and, may it not be added, how little is it attended to?

Our approaches to the throne of Divine grace, ought also to be accompanied with a trust in the mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ; to which he himself holds out this, and other encouraging promises: "Verily, verily. I say unto you, whatso-

over ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." We are also directed to "ask in faith, nothing wavering."

There is another important requisite necessary to be attended to, in the performance of the solemn duty of prayer. This is, the assistance of the Holy Spirit; the necessity of which the apostle Paul clearly sets forth, when he says, "The spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for, as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered: and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God." The same apostle, in another place, describes true prayer in this manner: "Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit; and watching thereunto with all perseverance."

But notwithstanding these requisites for the performance of true prayer, let not any be discouraged from an attention to this important duty from a sense of their own imperfections, or from an apprehension that their minds are not sufficiently under a superior influence to enter upon it. If we are sincerely desirous of being brought into a state of perfect acceptance with our Maker, we may approach him with an humble dependence on the Spirit and mediation of his Son, putting up our prayers unto him, and, "watching thereunto with all perseverance." Thus the penitent sinner will meet with that gracious acceptance which is mercifully held out to him, and the truth of the language of the Psalmist, will be verified in his experience: "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust."

Great is the importance of a due attention to the duty on which we are now treating, and to the various circumstances necessary for its acceptable performance. Of this the Psalmist appears to have been deeply sensible, when he preferred this petition to the Divine Being: "Let my prayer come up before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice." For want of a due attention to those circumstances, there is reason to fear, that many at this time may be subject to the same remark, which the apostle James makes concerning some in his day: "Ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not, ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss: that ye may consume it upon your lusts." On the other hand, we are told by the same apostle, that "the fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." This, we have good reason to believe, is the

prayer which ascends like incense, before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

CHAP. VII.

On Thanksgiving and Praise.

Thanksgiving is an expression of our gratitude to the Divine Being for favours received. Praise may convey a sense of admiration, as well as of gratitude, and is applicable to the power and wisdom as well as to the goodness of God. Thus the Psalmist: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

The reasonableness of these duties, and the obligations to perform them, are so self-evident to every considerate mind that believes in a Divine Being and Providence, that, if we had no injunctions to the practice of them, they would unavoidably become an almost involuntary effusion from every feeling heart. But it is to be regretted that, either from want of consideration, or from want of sensibility, there are among those who are surrounded with blessings on every hand, many who are inattentive to the favours which they enjoy, or ungrateful for them. Ingratitude to the Divine Being for temporal or spiritual blessings, is a sin which is peculiarly marked by his displeasure. Of this we have a strong proof in the instance of the Israelites, of whom, after recapitulating the peculiar favours by which they had been distinguished, it is said: "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked, then he forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, they sacrificed unto devils, and not to God. And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters."

Here we see the idolatry of the Jews described, as the consequence of their ingratitude for the blessings which were conferred upon them; and the apostle, in describing the depraved state of the heathen world, both in its religion and morality, traces it to the same source: "Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened: professing to be wise they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man; and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." When we consider these lamentable

consequences, as the result of unthankfulness and ingratitude now important is the exhortation of the prophet Jeremiah "Give glory to the Lord your God before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains; and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness."

Numerous are the examples, as well as the exhortations, which are contained in the Holy Scriptures, and particularly in the book of Psalms, relating to this subject, from which it may be sufficient to extract the following: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High; to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul! and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thy iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Oh! that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

The inspired writers of the New Testament likewise furnish us with many incitements to this duty. Christianity itself was introduced with, "Glory to God in the highest," as an acknowledgment previously necessary to the promotion of "peace on earth, and good will towards men." We find the mother of our Lord pouring out her soul, in a grateful song of praise, which begins with this pious language: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour—for he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name." The apostle Paul very pressingly inculcates an attention to these duties. "In every thing," says he, "give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be ye filled with the Spirit: speaking to yourselves in psalms, and in hymns, and in spiritual songs; singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always, for all things, unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name."

It is not, however, a formal performance of this duty that will meet with Divine approbation. It must, like prayer, be the product of an humbled and sanctified heart. When this is attained to, thankfulness and praise will frequently become involuntary effusions, and ascend with acceptance before Him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift; and, as this state of mind is continued in, qualification will finally be experienced to

join with that innumerable multitude, mentioned in the book of Revelations, who "stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, saying, Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb;" to which sacred anthem the whole Angelic Host, returned this responsive language: "Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen."

CHAP. VIII.

On Public Worship, and the appropriation of one Day in the Week for this purpose.

The Public Worship of the Almighty is a special duty of all men, who have opportunity and ability for it. This results from the relation in which we all stand to God, as our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor. Common benefits demand united thanksgiving and praises. A social acknowledgment of these mercies and blessings, not only becomes us, as dependent beings, but is attended with various advantages. The rich and prosperous, when thus assembled with the poor and afflicted, and acknowledging their dependence on the same great Benefactor, may learn humility, and be led to sentiments of charity towards their fellow-creatures. The children of poverty and distress, whilst assembled with the opulent, and joining them in solemn worship, may feel that they are all the offspring of one gracious Parent; all equally dependent on his bounty and goodness; and from those feelings they may learn to support, with resignation and hope, that allotment which the Father of Mercies has assigned to them. In the one class, sentiments of pride and contempt for others, are likely to be suppressed; and in the other, envy, discontent, and murmuring are discouraged. Whatever differences may elsewhere exist among men, in the presence of the Divine Being "the rich and the poor meet, equally, together: for the Lord is, equally, the maker of them all."

The Holy Scriptures inform us, that this duty had been practised in all ages, by those who had been distinguished for piety and virtue. In early times the sacrifices of animals, or offerings of the fruits of the earth, were the most common mode of publicly acknowledging a dependence on the Divine Being, and were most probably of Divine institution; but when it pleased the Almighty to separate from the rest of mankind a people whom he distinguished by peculiar precepts and favours, it appears that in addition to those offerings, they met together for the performance of Divine worship: "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary; I am the Lord." This precept

points out the institution of a time and place for public worship, and they were both religiously observed by the pious among the Jews; though there is reason to believe they were much neglected by many of another description.

The Psalmist, with that humble piety which peculiarly distinguishes his character, is an eminent instance of public, as well as private devotion: "As for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy, and in thy fear will I worship towards thy Holy temple." Again, "We will go into his tabernacle; we will worship at his footstool." And in order that he may perform this service acceptably, he forms an excellent resolution: "I will wash my hands in innocency; so will I compass thy altar, O Lord! that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works." Nor was it merely as an obligation, that he performed this important duty: "His delight was in the law of the Lord;" and this made the performance of religious worship a grateful, not an irksome task. "Lord I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honour dwelleth. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of God,—for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Although the Christian dispensation exempted its professors from the ceremonious part of the Jewish law, it did not by any means, exempt them from the duty of public worship. We have the examples of our Saviour and his apostles, in support of this practice. The apostle Paul is indeed very strenuous in inculcating it: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service; and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, public worship is thus excellently illustrated and enforced: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith;—not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

The Christian religion has, however, freed its professors from being confined to particular places, for the performance of religious worship. Thus our Saviour taught his disciples: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them:" and in the memorable conversation which he held with the Samaritan woman, he showed that public wor-

ship was not to be confined to any particular place ; for when she inquired of him whether Jerusalem, or the mountain of Samaria, was the true place of worship, he set them, and, by consequence, all other particular places aside, as being exclusively appropriated to this purpose. " Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, exclusively, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth ; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." Here we see the fulfilling of the evangelical prophecy : " In every place, incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering."

Though no place is exclusively essential to the performance of public worship ; yet some place is necessary for " the assembling of ourselves together ;" and some time must be peculiarly appropriated to this purpose. Under the Jewish law, and most probably prior to that time, the seventh day of the week was set apart for this service : but when that dispensation was abrogated, the primitive Christians thought proper to alter the time from the seventh, to the first day of the week.—Although the ceremonial part of the Jewish sabbath is not obligatory upon Christians, yet several of the reasons assigned for its institution, apply to us equally with them. Christians in all ages have, therefore, agreed in the appropriation of a seventh day, or one day in the week, to be particularly set apart for public worship, and for other means of religious improvement ; as also for a time of relaxation and rest from bodily labour, to those who are subject to it. This indulgence was extended under the law, to the animal creation, as well as to those persons who were in a state of servitude and bondage : " That thine ox and thine ass may rest ; and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger may be refreshed."

The religious observance of one day in the week, is of so much importance to the preservation of piety and virtue ; and the neglect of it is so evidently marked with irreligion, and, in general, with immorality, that, however necessary it is to avoid the superstitious observance of it, which our Saviour had occasion to censure, in the time of his personal appearance on earth ; yet every reasonable consideration conspires to press the practice closely upon us, as affording an opportunity, which many could not otherwise easily obtain, of acquiring religious instruction and improvement ; and of publicly performing that worship, which is due unto " Him that made heaven and earth, the seas, and the fountains of waters."

The pious Christian does not, however, confine his public de-

votions to one day in the week. Sensible of the obligation, and feeling the benefit of a more frequent performance of this religious service, he embraces opportunities, when afforded to him, of attending on public worship, on some other day, or days, than that which is especially set apart for this purpose: and, although this may in some instances, require him to leave his temporal concerns; and may seem to be attended with some worldly disadvantages; yet the views which he entertains of religious obligations, induce him to follow the example of the good king David, when, on a certain occasion, he made use of this disinterested language: "Neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God, of that which doth cost me nothing."

CHAP. IX.

On Obedience and Patience.

After treating on the preceding particular duties, it may be proper to take notice of the general duty of Obedience; and to connect with it that of Patience. By obedience is meant the practical and active part of those duties, which we know to be the Divine will concerning us.

When the mind is impressed with the belief of the power and goodness of God, and brought under the influence of that love and fear which we owe to him, obedience to the manifestations of his will, become the necessary result of this impression and influence. But, as the operations of these principles is generally slow and gradual, and the Christian traveller has many temptations and difficulties to encounter, before he has reason to believe that, "in him verily is the love of God perfected;" it is of importance to know, that simple obedience to the Divine will is an indispensable obligation: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams: for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

Fear and love are, however, motives which are essential to true obedience. We find them in the Holy Scriptures used to excite the minds of the people to the service of God, and to an attention to his commands: "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve him. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments alway. Ye shall observe to do as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right-hand, or to the left; that ye may live, and that it may be well with you. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel:—Obey my voice, and walk ye in all my ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you."

In the New Testament, the importance of obedience to the Di-

vine will and commands, is very strongly enforced. Our blessed Redeemer manifested how little he sought the praise of men, and how much he desired the glory of his Father, and the real good of mankind, when he gave this salutary caution to his hearers : "Not every one that saith unto me Lord! Lord! shall enter the kingdom; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven." Again he saith : "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." And it was the observation of his beloved disciple, "he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever."

Besides the particular instructions given by the apostles of Christ, the general duty of obedience, or keeping the Divine commands, is thus enforced : "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments : and his commandments are not grievous. Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar ; and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him, verily, is the love of God perfected." When we consider these various testimonies to the importance of the practical part of religion ; in which is necessarily involved a belief of its doctrines, because these are likewise Divine commands ; we shall see the propriety of that conclusion, to which Solomon, after all his researches was brought : "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Intimately connected with obedience, is the duty of patience : by which is understood the bearing with fortitude of mind and resignation to the Divine will, whatever is permitted to befall us in this probationary state of existence. Obedience and patience, or to do and suffer the whole will of God, may be said to comprehend the whole of those duties which religion and virtue require. Patience therefore holds an important place among the duties of a Christian. His life is aptly compared to a state of warfare, in which he has not only much to do, but much to bear. He must, in common with other men, submit to many privations and trials ; and sometimes his religion will subject him to more ; for which, however, it affords an ample compensation. But as this compensation is not always immediate, we are called upon by our faith, our hope, and our love to the Supreme Being, without whose providential attention, we are told not a hair of our heads falleth to the ground, to bear with holy resignation, whatever he permits to befall us ; and, in conformity to those excellent examples which are transmitted to us in Holy Writ, to say, when sufferings and trials are our lot : "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be

the name of the Lord. Not my will but thine be done. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

When our Lord was apprising his disciples of the afflictions which would befall them, he gave them this seasonable exhortation: "In your patience possess ye your souls;" and it seems that this exhortation was not in vain, for we afterwards find, when their Lord's predictions were verified, they had so attended to his instructions, as to be able to say: "We glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. For which cause we faint not; for though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day: for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen, are eternal." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, gives the following instructive exhortations on this subject: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. We have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they, verily, for a few days chastened us, for their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening, for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby."

The apostle James, among other exhortations to the duty of patience, gives the following: "Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and patience. Behold, we count them happy who endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that he is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

As affliction is more or less the lot of humanity, it is of the utmost importance that we endeavour to have our minds fortified by patience, which may be called the strong hold of religion and virtue. To this end it may be beneficial to us to consider, how much we enjoy, or may enjoy, and of how little we are worthy. Humility is the ground-work of patience. It gives light to the mind, and strength to the heart. "But if thou faint (says Solomon) in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." The hum

ble, resigned mind knows that all things shall work together for good : and in times of affliction is enabled to say with the prophet :
 “ Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines ; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls ; yet I will rejoice in the Lord ; will joy in the God of my salvation.”

CHAP. X.

On Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we consider the number and extent of our duties to God, on the one hand ; and the depravity and frailty of human nature, on the other ; we must suppose that the neglect or violation of these duties will, at times, take place, even with those who may make the most early and regular advances in the way of holiness ; but with respect to the generality of mankind, this neglect and violation are so prevalent, and self-evident, that any attempt to demonstrate them would be superfluous. If, therefore, it is, as it ought to be, a matter of concern to us, to live and die in the Divine favour, repentance, united with amendment of life, becomes a most important duty.

The very first sermons which were preached both by our Saviour, and his fore-runner, the Baptist, were on the subject of repentance ; and in a few energetic expressions they enforced this first principle of the doctrine of Christ : “ Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance.” With these precepts was laid, as it were, the foundation of that religion, with which the world has been blessed through Jesus Christ. Repentance was, no doubt, always a necessary duty, since the transgression of our first parents : but the gospel dispensation being more particularly applied to the depraved state of human nature, this first work of true religion is primarily inculcated. We also find, that when the disciples went forth to preach and to teach, this appears to have been the first and principal part of their mission : for we are told by one of the Evangelists, that “ they went out and preached that men should repent.” After the ascension of our Lord, and the pouring forth of the Spirit on the apostles and disciples, we find the doctrine of repentance was preached in this powerful language : “ Repent ye, and be converted ; that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord : and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you.”

In that excellent relation of his gospel labours, which the apostle Paul gave to the elders of Ephesus, we may perceive

that repentance formed a very prominent part in the doctrines which he taught: "testifying (says he) both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

The connexion of repentance with faith in Christ, forms a peculiar excellence of the gospel dispensation, and to which it is of the utmost importance to attend. How consoling is this consideration! "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." Numerous are the testimonies in holy writ to this gracious design of our merciful Redeemer. The evangelical prophet strongly and clearly speaks of it: "He was wounded for our transgressions; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes are we healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." This passage was opened to the Ethiopian Eunuch, and applied to Christ by Philip the Evangelist.

The doctrine of faith in Christ, as the means of reconciliation with God, is forcibly inculcated in the writings of the apostles. To repeat all that they say on this subject, would be to transcribe a large portion of their Epistles. We are told by our Saviour himself, when some inquired of him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God? This is the work of God, that ye believe on him, whom God hath sent." The importance of this belief, or faith, is thus inculcated by the apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans: "Now the righteousness of God without the law, is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth, to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, largely exemplifies the doctrine of Christian redemption. The eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters are particularly forcible and interesting, in the manner in which this subject is treated; and it will be proper to recite, in this place, some of the pertinent exhortations and observations with which he closes the subject: "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us through the veil.—that is to say, his flesh: and having a High

Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith. He that despised Moses's law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and done despite to the Spirit of Grace? For we know him, who hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord: and again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Seeing then, that our duty and interest are both intimately connected with our possessing faith in Christ; let us embrace it with full purpose of heart, and, hold fast the profession of it without wavering. Yet let us not forget that "faith without works is dead, being alone;" and that we ought therefore to "add to our faith, virtue:" and to hold it in conjunction with a good conscience: thus may we entertain a well-grounded hope, that, when this probationary state shall terminate, we shall "receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls."

LITTLE SINS,

A DIALOGUE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED, AN ABSTRACT

OF AN

INTERESTING CONVERSATION.



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LITTLE SINS.

William. My good neighbour, I have been long used to regard you as a conscientious man; and on many occasions have beheld with pleasure the influence of the fear of God to preserve you from corrupt practices, which too much prevail, and to lead you to attend to duties, which are too much neglected.

Robert. You alarm me, William;—surely, I have not given you occasion to change your opinion of me.

William. No; I still think of you with the respect, which I have been used to feel; I should be uncharitable and unjust, if I did not. But my friendship leads me to say, that I have frequently witnessed in you,—and of late more than in time past,—a nearer approach to the ways of wicked men than a Christian ought to venture upon.

Robert. I believe that what you say is with a friendly spirit; in that spirit be a little more particular.

William. You abhor swearing; but I have heard you mention the name of God lightly. You reverence the Scriptures; but I have witnessed instances of your using their awful or affecting words to convey a joke, and to raise merriment. You would not defraud your neighbours; but I have been grieved to observe you taking advantage of their ignorance, or of their readiness to believe and trust you. Your heart is kind, and your activity in doing good, according to your small means, has often made me admire you; yet I have noticed that it must be in your own way, that there are distresses, of which you seem to have little feeling, and schemes of usefulness, which you regard with indifference. Your common government of your own spirit might serve as a pattern; yet I have seen you too soon and too violently angry. You are not a glutton nor a drunkard; but you sometimes take more than is good for body or mind. You, in general, deserve to be esteemed a patient, contented man; you can even cheerfully enjoy your humble station; yet on some occasions you indulge in fretfulness, and seem to think that you could have done better for yourself than God does for you.

Robert. Enough, enough, William. I now understand what you mean; and I own that your remarks are not without ground. But do you not judge these *little sins* too severely? Would you condemn a man for the infirmities of his nature; for failings, which, with our powers and in our condition, we can hardly avoid? Is the great Governor of the world really offended with a few trifling liberties; or will he rigorously visit small or occasional omissions of duty? Will he make no account of the instances, in which we truly fear and love, honour and obey him? Will he exact the whole debt, which we owe him, because we do not pay him the uttermost farthing?

William. My good friend, it is the last thing, which I would

give occasion to be laid to my charge, that I undervalue the mercy of God, or that I wish to shake your reliance on this mercy. But I must admonish you, that you have now joined together words, between which there can be no agreement. There is no such thing as a little sin. When we think or talk of breaking the laws of God, as a matter of no concern, or of inconsiderable moment, our thoughts and our words are gross and dangerous absurdities. With more reason might we talk of trifling earthquakes, or of harmless poisons.

Robert. What say you, are there no little sins? Does not our Lord speak of the least of the divine commands? Is it not the fixed law of God, that as a man soweth so he shall also reap? And can you imagine that there is no difference between the offences, which men commit; and that the Judge will punish alike all wicked indulgences, and all neglects of duty and service?

William. I imagine no such thing. I have no doubt that there are different degrees of sin, guilt, and punishment. But though one sin is undoubtedly little compared with another, no sin is little in itself, none insignificant, none that should not be accounted a fit cause of regret and fear. Nor do your little sins, as you call them, always give the least occasion for remorse, when they are committed, and for apprehension in looking forward to expected dangers.

Robert. If, as you allow, our Governor and Judge makes a difference between the evil principles and practices of men; what reason can there be to insist as earnestly upon godly sorrow and watchfulness in my case, as in that of a thief or a murderer?

William. One reason is, that by sins, miscalled little ones, we as much break the laws, and trample upon the authority of God, as by grosser offences. We plead that they are indifferent matters, or things of small moment, in which we indulge contrary to the divine rule. Can any thing, which God commands, be a matter of indifference? Can aught, which he forbids, be a thing of light concern? If these be matters taken into his government, and regulated by his laws, does not this render them alike binding and alike momentous? Is it not the same divine rule, which says, "thou shalt not steal," which says also, "thou shalt not covet?" Does not the same authority, which proclaims, "thou shalt not kill," with equal plainness declare, "thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart?" Are not the least of these commandments given in exactly the same decided and solemn manner as the greater? Is it not the will of Him, who governs us, that he be as fully obeyed in one point as in the other? For what purpose but for this, could he think of laying these orders before us? What opinions must we have of the Majesty in the heavens, when his plain and acknowledged commands cannot restrain us from transgressions, because we foolishly reckon them among the least?

Robert. I still know not how to admit that he, who speaks lightly of his Maker, as surely takes his name in vain as the man that swears falsely; or that covetous thoughts show the same disregard to the divine rule as taking what is another man's: or that malicious desires mark an equal contempt of the divine authority with shedding the blood of my neighbour.

William. I am sorry, if I fail to convince you. I cannot make my meaning plainer; though I might add to the weight of the argument. You pretend to obey God; you are practically obedient in great points; in points, which you esteem little ones, you resist, and would be held guiltless. You profess to consider certain sacrifices as of small moment, and yet you refuse to offer them at the demand of your God. Base and hard must be the heart, which refuses to a Father, as well as a Sovereign, certain marks of duty, while at the same time it accounts them trifling. Poor must be the pretences to sincerity and zeal in higher services, which are made amidst such disobedience.

Robert. But if I break the commandments of God by little sins as surely as by great ones, I must still think that they do not equally corrupt my heart, and stain my way of life; that they do not in the same measure load my conscience with guilt, and make me fit for condemnation. You allow that one offence is more base, more impious, more injurious, than another. If so, the greater the crime, the greater appear to me the corruption, the guilt, and the danger.

William. True; if it were only one indulgence of covetous desire, for instance, that is to be weighed against a single fraud, there is no question which would weigh the heavier. But great crimes seldom occur; little sins frequently. Great crimes are commonly the consequence of strong temptations; small ones are often ventured upon almost without temptation. It is their number, their frequency, their familiarity, which join to show what they really are.

As I intended to converse with you on this subject, I put a book into my pocket, from which I will, with your leave, read what seems to me a striking and convincing passage.—“To use false weights and a deceitful balance is as criminal as a direct act of theft. He who defrauds his neighbour daily in the course of his business, is a greater sinner before God, and a worse member of society, than he who once robs upon the highway. The frequency of these little sins makes the guilt great, and the danger extreme. The constant operation of evil deeds impairs the strength of the soul, and shakes the foundation, on which virtue rests. These little sins, increasing by indulgence, blast wherever they come; by degrees they make the spiritual life decay; they lay waste the new creation and turn the intellectual world into a chaos, without form and void

of order. And yet we are not on our guard against them. It fares with us as it did with the Israelites of old; we tremble more at one Goliath than at the whole army of the Philistines. One gross scandalous sin makes us start back; and yet we venture on the guilt of numberless smaller sins, without hesitation or remorse. What signifies it, whether you die of many small wounds, or by one great wound? What difference does it make, whether the devouring fire be kindled by many sparks, or by one firebrand? When God shall reckon up against you, at the great day, the many thousand malicious thoughts, slanderous words, petty oaths, deceits and falsehoods, that you have been guilty of, the account will be as dreadful, and the wrath as insupportable, as if atrocious crimes had stood upon the list."

Robert. I am no judge of fine writing, but these seem to me strong and eloquent words. Perhaps I might understand them better, if I could read them with care. But if I am not mistaken, their chief meaning is, that many little sins, committed as they usually are for a length of time, are as bad as a few heinous offences. Of this I am half convinced.

William. I wish, Robert, you were quite convinced; for it is, I believe, a most serious truth. You may look over the passage at your leisure, and read the rest of the discourse. When you read it, I beseech you to attend carefully to what the writer further advances,—that these little offences, rendering life one course of transgression, make the conviction and conversion of the soul exceedingly difficult, almost impossible.

"Often, says he, upon the commission of a gross sin, a sober interval succeeds; serious reflection has its hour; sorrow and contrition of heart take their turn; then is the crisis of a man's character; and many, improving this favourable opportunity, have risen the greater from their fall. But if these little sins then come in; if, between the commission of one gross sin and another, there be a constant neglect of God, a hardness of heart, a vanity of imagination, and unfruitfulness of life; you still add to the measure of guilt, and treasure up to yourselves wrath against the day of wrath. Such little sins fill up all the void spaces; every avenue by which the heart might be reached, is closed; and life becomes an unbroken chain of iniquity. Thus are men rendered incapable of reformation, and put themselves, as far as they can, out of the reach of divine grace."

Robert. I own that I have felt uneasy on account of these little sins; but this uneasiness has never been violent, and it has soon passed away. I have persuaded myself, indeed, that there was no occasion for any great trouble on their account. My conscience now speaks to me on the subject with more alarm than usual. Yet I wish you to proceed, and to keep back nothing which you intended to say.

William. My only remaining wish was, with my helper, as

you call this book, to represent to you, how one transgression leads on to more; how great offences naturally appear less heinous to every one, who has been long used to transgress in smaller points.

Robert. This is what I have been expecting. Often have I heard, how sin leads to greater sin; and I thought you would bring it forward, to strengthen what you have been saying. But I am not so fully satisfied as you seem to be, that it is always true. My own state is, if I am not greatly mistaken, an evidence against its truth. My little sins have not yet led me far in the paths of the destroyer, and I trust they never will. If in this respect I boast, the testimony, with which you begun the conversation, may serve to show that my boasting is not entirely without ground.

William. What I said, Robert, of my hope that the fear of God prevailed in you, and of your consequent freedom from many prevailing corruptions, and your performance of some neglected duties, I said sincerely, and deliberately. Do not forget what I added, that according to my judgment, some of your faults were growing upon you. And however you may have been hitherto preserved from great offences, or however light you may make of the truth as applied to your own case, no truth is clearer than that sin leads to greater sin, and no truth speaks more fearfully to one, who comforts himself with the thought that his are little sins. When a man has, for some vain purpose or other wandered into the way of evil, he often wants the aid of other transgressions in order to get any thing by his first false step. He, who has lightly departed from the truth, maintains what he has advanced by new and deliberate falsehoods. The fraudulent are driven to many shifts, and most of them wicked ones, so to support their character as to render their frauds of any avail. The heart, once corrupted, is by degrees wrought upon more and more easily; the conscience becomes seared; and sins, which to a beginner would have appeared horrible, seem nothing to one trained to evil. Truly is it said in the Apocrypha,—“he that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little.”

“Come not then, says the book in my hand, near the territories of perdition. Stand back, and survey the torrent, which is now so mighty and overflowing that it deluges the land; and you will find it to proceed from a small and contemptible brook. Examine the conflagration, that has laid a city in ashes, and you will find it to arise from a single spark.”

Robert. You have not spared me, William; but as I still believe that you have spoken as a true friend, I thank you. Forgive me, if I have not heard you as I ought. You have made an impression, which I promise you I will endeavour not to lose.

(The quotations, and some other hints, from a sermon by I. Logan.)

Abstract of an interesting conversation between a Roman Catholic clergyman, and a person who had been in an extensive line of business; but having retired from it, and wanting that occupation which used to engage his attention, had got into an uncomfortable and dissatisfied state of mind, very trying to himself and others.

THE clergyman is a man, who to a highly cultivated mind, unites a strong and comprehensive understanding: though a naturally volatile and susceptible disposition, had made him for years the sport of his feelings. He was often favoured with strong desires after the best things, and then, the charms of society, and the example of others, led him off from what he knew and felt to be right: but for several years he has been a changed character, withdrawing himself very much from the world, and devoting a considerable portion of his time to retirement and meditation. Very frequent intercourse with the person above named, (whom we shall call M. R.) and who entertained the highest opinion of his talents and good qualities, permitted a freedom of conversation on his part, that would scarcely have been brooked from any other individual; and one evening, on incidentally speaking of a person of eighty-four, who for many years had been deprived of sight, and was labouring under a complication of most painful disorders, yet was one of the happiest men he knew—frequently acknowledging the many blessings he possessed, in the beautiful language of the Psalmist—M. R. remarked, that, “to have attained to such a state, and with such infirmities, he must possess naturally a happy and placid temper:”—“Quite the contrary,” replied the clergyman, “his natural temper was irascible and violent.”—M. R.—“Then what effected the wonderful change?”—Clergyman, “Religion.”—M. R.—“Religion may do much, but if the natural temper is not good, there will be moments when the mind is thrown off its guard, and the dispositions nature has given, will show themselves: we may reason—we may feel the folly of giving way to irritation; yet when vexations arise, who will venture to say, that with philosophic calmness he can stand his ground?”—Clergyman—“you are going, my dear sir, from our subject: I was not speaking of either reason or philosophy, for these I know can do little; it is RELIGION alone that can control the passions, subdue the temper, and infuse into the soul tranquillity and peace.” M. R.—“Well, putting philosophy and reasoning out of the question, yet I cannot allow that the religious character can so far get above the weaknesses of his nature, that he will not at times feel the infirmities, the passions, and the irritations that are attached to it; you cannot think otherwise.” Clergyman—“My dear friend, I do think otherwise; and if you will give me a patient hearing, I will explain to you what I mean, I may say, the *convictions* of my soul, on a subject of the first importance: I mean the regeneration of the human heart: man is by nature, the most irritable and the most selfish of all animals; the light of his natural reason is unable to overcome his evil propensities; and He who created him (with a condescension and love that must ever call forth our gratitude and praise,) has planted, or put into his heart, a heavenly principle; an emanation of light from His own Divine nature, for him to profit withal: this Divine principle, which we term the grace of God, becomes more and more clear as it is attended to; and it subdues, cleanses, and I may say consumes, all that is of an earthly, selfish, and sordid nature; a soul given up to its influence undergoes a complete change; a new birth is experienced; old attachments are done away; new affections, new desires spring up; the spiritual understanding is illuminated; it sees the world in its true

colours, and acknowledges the emptiness and vanity of all created things." M. R.—"Excuse me for interrupting you, but just let me ask, if you believe man can attain perfection whilst in a state of mutability?" Clergyman—"Perfection comprehends *every thing*; and I dare not venture to make use of so strong a word; but it is my full belief, that by giving way to this spiritual Teacher, by attending to its dictates, its admonitions and reproofs, the soul undergoes such a complete change, that whilst in the body, it is permitted to hold a sweet and intimate communion with its Maker; and when its frail tabernacle is dissolved, it is united to the fountain of all good, in a union never to be broken." M. R.—"Then it is your opinion, that none but purified spirits of this high order, are allowed an entrance into heaven; and that the great bulk of mankind are shut out of it." Clergyman—"Far be it from me to set limits to the mercy of the Almighty; it is a subject I do not feel at liberty at present to enter upon; but let me return to our subject, and ask if you are convinced, that a gracious God has not left man to be the sport of his wayward passions; but has given him a counteracting principle sufficiently powerful to overcome them?" M. R.—"Your reasoning appears so clear and conclusive, that I have nothing more to say; only, that to arrive at this state must be a most difficult, though a most desirable attainment." Clergyman—"Oh, my friend! that I may not only convince your judgment; but that, through infinite goodness, you may experimentally know and acknowledge, the truth of what I have asserted, is my fervent wish! and believe me, the attainment is not so difficult as you imagine—the work is not left to our feeble powers; we have but to co-operate with this Divine principle; to desire with our whole hearts this purifying change; to be willing to feel as passive clay in the hands of the mighty Potter: and we shall be led, step by step, till this supernatural regeneration is effected. I know the state of your mind perfectly; surrounded with comforts and blessings, you are like a man in a fever, restless and irritable; you turn from side to side, and find no permanent rest: trifles discompose you; little evils are magnified into great ones; and, with a mind of more comprehension, intellect, and energy, than generally falls to the lot of man, you fritter away your moments without utility, and without pleasure. Let me conjure you, as you wish for happiness, to reflect upon your situation, to search after this Divine light within you, to attend to its teachings, and expect no happiness but through and by it. I can feelingly speak to you; and I do solemnly declare, that after pursuing happiness for years, in the schools of the learned, in the philosophy of ages, and in the pleasures of the world—I found her not, till I became acquainted with this pure and vital principle. Let me entreat that you will often retire into inward silence, and under a deep sense of your own weakness, sit as it were at the feet of Jesus. You will find a strength given you, a consolation poured into your soul, that at present you have no idea of. Those irritable and restless feelings will be overcome; every care will be diminished; every blessing will be doubled to you; and the evening of your days will close in peace and hope."—[*Occasional Reflections.*]



WILLIAM PENN'S

E X H O R T A T I O N .

WILLIAM PENN, in a Treatise entitled "The Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers," addresses to various classes of his readers, instructive advice on the subject of their everlasting welfare. Deeply sensible himself, of the unspeakable importance of closely attending to the light of Christ as revealed in the secret of the soul, he earnestly laboured to lead others to attend to and obey it, directing all to the Grace of God that bringeth salvation, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

In his closing exhortation he thus addresses those who are yet strangers to that strait and narrow path in which he was led, and in which he experienced that "peace which passeth all understanding."

FRIENDS, as you are the sons and daughters of Adam, and my brethren after the flesh, often and earnest have been my desires and prayers to God on your behalf, that you may come to know your Creator to be your Redeemer and Restorer to the holy image that through sin you have lost, by the power and spirit of his son Jesus Christ, whom he hath given for the light and life of the world. And O that you, who are called Christians, would receive him into your hearts! For there it is you want him, and at that door he stands knocking that you might let him in, but you do not open to him: you are full of other

guests, so that a manger is his lot among you now, as well as of old. Yet you are full of profession, as were the Jews when he came among them, who knew him not, but rejected and evilly entreated him. So that if you come not to the possession and experience of what you profess, all your formality in religion will stand you in no stead in the day of God's judgment.

I beseech you ponder with yourselves your eternal condition, and see what title, what ground and foundation you have for your Christianity :—if more than a profession, and an historical belief of the Gospel. Have you known the baptism of fire, and the Holy Ghost, and the fan of Christ that winnows away the chaff in your minds, the carnal lusts and affections? That divine leaven of the kingdom, that, being received, leavens the whole lump of man, sanctifying him throughout in body, soul, and spirit? If this be not the ground of your confidence, you are in a miserable estate.

You will say, perhaps, that though you are sinners, and live in daily commission of sin, and are not sanctified, yet you have faith in Christ, who has borne the curse for you, and in him you are complete by faith, his righteousness being imputed to you.

But, my friends, let me entreat you not to deceive yourselves in so important a point, as is that of your immortal souls. If you have true faith in Christ, your faith will make you clean; it will sanctify you: for the saints' faith was their victory of old; by this they overcame sin within, and sinful men without. And if thou art in Christ, thou walkest not after the flesh, but after the spirit, whose fruits are manifest. Yea, thou art a new creature: new made, new fashioned, after God's will and mould. Old things are done away, and behold, all things are become new: new love, desires, will, affections, and practices. It is not any longer thou that livest, thou disobedient, carnal, worldly one; but it is Christ that liveth in thee; and to live is Christ, and to die is thy eternal gain: because thou art assured, that thy corruptible shall put on incorruption, and thy mortal immortality, and that thou hast a glorious house eternal in the heavens, that will never grow old or pass away. All this follows being in Christ, as heat follows fire and light the sun.

Therefore have a care how you presume to rely upon such a notion, as that you are in Christ, whilst in your old fallen nature: for what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial? Hear what the beloved disciple tells you: If we say we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. That is, if we go on in a sinful way, are captivated by our carnal affections, and are not converted

o God, we walk in darkness, and cannot possibly in that state have any fellowship with God. Christ clothes them with his righteousness that receive his grace in their hearts, and deny themselves, and take up his cross daily, and follow him. Christ's righteousness makes men inwardly holy; of holy minds, wills, and practices. It is nevertheless Christ's, because we have it; for it is ours, not by nature, but by faith and adoption: it is the gift of God. But still, though not ours, as of or from ourselves, for in that sense it is Christ's, for it is of and from him; yet it is ours, and must be ours in possession, efficacy, and enjoyment, to do us any good; or Christ's righteousness will profit us nothing. It was after this manner that he was made, to the primitive Christians, righteousness, sanctification, justification, and redemption; and if ever you will have the comfort, kernel, and marrow; of the Christian religion, thus you must come to learn and obtain it.

The world talks of God, but what do they do? They pray for power, but reject the principle in which it is. If you would know God, and worship and serve God as you should do, you must come to the means he has ordained and given for that purpose. Some seek it in books, some in learned men; but what they look for is in themselves, though not of themselves, but they overlook it. The voice is too still, the seed too small, and the light shineth in darkness; they are abroad, and so cannot divide the spoil: but the woman that lost her silver, found it at home, after she had lighted her candle and swept her house. Do you so too, and you shall find what Pilate wanted to know, namely, *Truth*—truth in the inward parts, so valuable in the sight of God.

The light of Christ within, who is the light of the world, (and so a light to you, that tells you the truth of your condition,) leads all, that take heed unto it, out of darkness into God's marvellous light. For light grows upon the obedient: it is sown for the righteous, and their way is a shining light, that shines forth more and more to the perfect day.

Wherefore, O Friends, turn in, turn in, I beseech you: where is the poison, there is the antidote. There you want Christ, and there you must find him; and, blessed be God, there you may find him. Seek and you shall find, I testify for God. But then you must seek aright, with your whole heart, as men that seek for their lives, yea, for their eternal lives: diligently, humbly, patiently, as those that can taste no pleasure, comfort, or satisfaction, in anything else, unless you find him whom your souls want to know and love above all. O, it is a travail,

a *spiritual* travail ! let the carnal, profane world think and say as it will. And through this path you must walk to the city of God, that has eternal foundations, if ever you will come there.

Well, and what does this blessed light do for you ? Why, first, it sets all your sins in order before you : it detects the spirit of this world in all its baits and allurements, and shows how man came to fall from God, and the fallen estate he is in. Secondly, it begets a sense and sorrow, in such as believe in it, for this fearful lapse. You will then see him distinctly whom you have pierced, and all the blows and wounds you have given him by your disobedience, and how you have made him to serve with your sins ; and you will weep and mourn for it, and your sorrow will be a godly sorrow. Thirdly, after this it will bring you to the holy watch, to take care that you do so no more, and that the enemy surprise you not again. Then thoughts, as well as words and works, will come to judgment, which is the way of holiness, in which the redeemed of the Lord do walk. Here you will come to love God above all, and your neighbours as yourselves. Nothing hurts, nothing harms, nothing makes afraid, on this holy mountain. Now you come to be Christ's indeed ; for you are his in nature and spirit, and not your own. And when you are thus Christ's, then Christ is yours, and not before. And here communion with the Father and with the Son you will know, and the efficacy of the blood of cleansing, even the blood of Jesus Christ, that immaculate lamb, which speaks better things than the blood of Abel ; and which cleanseth from all sin the consciences of those that through the living faith come to be sprinkled with it from dead works to serve the living God.

Thus says one that God has long since mercifully favoured with his fatherly visitation, and who was not disobedient to the heavenly vision and call ; to whom the way of truth is more lovely and precious than ever, and that knowing the beauty and benefit of it above all worldly treasures, has chosen it for his chiefest joy ; and therefore recommends it to thy love and choice, because he is with great sincerity and affection,

Thy soul's friend,

WILLIAM PENN.

THE END.

A
MEMOIR
OF
H ——— G ——— ,
LATE OF PHILADELPHIA;
BEING
A STRIKING INSTANCE
OF THE
INFLUENCE
OF
DIVINE GRACE
ON
THE MIND.



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A STRIKING INSTANCE, &c.

THOUGH the grand evidence of those truths upon which our hopes are built, arises from the authority of God declaring them in the Scriptures, and revealing them by his Spirit to the awakened heart; (for till the heart is awakened, it is incapable of receiving this evidence;) yet some of these truths are so mysterious and repugnant to the judgment of depraved nature, that through the remaining influence of unbelief and vain reasoning, the temptations of Satan, and the subtle arguments with which they are attacked by some men, reputed wise, the minds even of believers, for want of keeping to the gift of Divine grace in themselves, are sometimes capable of being shaken. It is not then at all wonderful that persons who are already in love with the world, and desirous of indulging with greater liberty in its delusive gratifications, should be ready to receive principles which promise temporary relief from the remorse of conscience and the restraints of religious obligation. But there is perhaps no better corroborating evidence of the truths of the gospel, than the testimony of such persons, who, through the mercy and goodness of a gracious Creator, are on a death bed, brought to see they have been trampling upon the convictions of his grace, and by the deceitful workings of the grand enemy of man's happiness, have been induced to believe a lie. Being favoured by the renewed visitations of the love of Christ, to experience that "sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of," succeeded by the consoling evidence of his merciful acceptance, such are at this awful period, when dissimulation is at an end, often enabled to give unequivocal testimony to the transcendent value of an interest in Jesus Christ, and that the sacred doctrines of the gospel are worthy of the fullest belief. All the attempts of artful men to undervalue the meritorious sacrifice, and availing mediation of our dear Redeemer, are then seen to originate in the dark designs of the father of lies, and the conviction is indelibly impressed that a sincere faith and trust in our Lord Jesus Christ is the only solid foundation for the Christian's hope of a blessed immortality. An instance of this nature will be found in the following account.

H—— G——, of Philadelphia, was a young woman of extraordinary natural endowments, and sweetness of disposition. Her benevolence was in proportion to her power of doing good; and cheerfulness of mind, and easy affability rendered her an object of esteem and affection, to most who knew her. Happy would it have been for her, if, in childhood, these gifts of Heaven had been properly cultivated and directed: happy, had they been subjected to the government of that Divine Principle of Light and Truth in the secret of the heart, which is freely given to every one to profit withal, and is the "crown of glory and diadem &c

beauty!" But her aspiring mind could not stoop to the simplicity of the truth. She stumbled at the *cross*, and at that *wisdom* which is foolishness with men; and "the still, small voice" of the "Teacher sent from God," was rarely listened to, and less frequently obeyed. She chose for her companions the gay and the volatile; the books of her choice were novels, plays, romances, and Paine's *Age of Reason*; but the Sacred Volume was seldom opened, save to cavil at some parts of its inspired contents. Thus did her reading embrace the doctrines of *Infidelity* in all its delusive forms, and her conduct was, without hypocrisy, consonant with her faith. She attended no place for Divine Worship, but spent many of her precious hours at the theatre and other similar places. Religious characters were sedulously avoided, and their friendly admonitions disregarded. Some years were thus unconcernedly spent, when it pleased her Creator to blast her prospects and her health by consumption. Long did she linger, yet long were her old companions and books the exclusive objects of her attention. Her situation excited the sympathy of some who were not ignorant of the deplorable state of her poor *soul*, but these *real friends* could find no access to her. The writer of this, however, unburdened his mind to her in a letter, which he has cause to believe, she condescended to read; and one evening, a few weeks previous to her decease, called at the house in hope of being invited into her chamber, but was disappointed. He inquired of her mother what was the state of the daughter's mind, now, in the prospect of hastening dissolution? Her answer was: "She is quite resigned and willing to die, and says she don't know that she *ever did any harm*." The Friend replied that if she rested her hopes of happiness on such *innocence* as this, she would be miserably disappointed, and that unless she felt an interest in CHRIST JESUS, the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, her misery was inevitable; that HE alone was the *mediator* between God and man, and that he doubted not, when she had a proper sight of herself, she would abhor that righteousness in which she now trusted, and in the bitterness of *repentance* would cry out in language like this: "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!"

The secret operations of the unspeakable GRACE of the Redeemer, notwithstanding, brought about a new state of things in her soul: she became seriously concerned to know her true situation, requested one who sat by her to bring the BIBLE, and read to her, talked of the awfulness of *death* and *eternity*, asked some questions concerning the *Saviour*, the object of his mission, birth, sufferings, death, resurrection, &c. and grew pensive and sorrowful. Divine light shone, at seasons, on passages of the Holy Scriptures, which now became her only book. She sent for a female minister, to whom she expressed her unworthiness to

claim the merits of Jesus, and said, "dost thou think that such a one as I may hope?" Her answer tended to encourage her to hope, provided she trusted in the righteousness of Christ alone; and after a solemn pause, the Friend knelt in supplication by her bed-side, and was thus the instrument of much consolation to her. She now with her whole heart sought Him, whom she had "rejected," she "mourned because of Him whom she had pierced," and He mercifully manifested himself to her longing, almost desponding soul, and therein shed abroad his *light* and *love*, whereby she was enabled to testify of His goodness "who will-eth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he turn from his wickedness and live!"

A few days previous to her dissolution, she sent for the writer of this memoir, who gladly obeyed the summons, and, for the first time, entered her chamber, where he found her supported in bed by her father, and surrounded by her weeping relatives. On seeing him, she said: "Dear —— how I did want to see thee! I know thou wast always my friend." He replied, that he had felt much interested for her, and was glad of the present interview. "Oh!" said she, "I have been eager after knowledge, but have neglected the *only true knowledge*." "Yes," answered he, "thou hast neglected the only *mean* of obtaining substantial knowledge, namely, CHRIST JESUS, who is the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*, and who came to seek and to save, not the righteous, but *sinners*." "Ah," replied she, "I have been a sinner, a great sinner: how have I mispent my precious time! how have I wasted my talents, which should have been improved to the glory of God! and can it be that he forgives such a sinner as I?" On her friend repeating the declaration: "Thy sins and thy iniquities will I remember no more;" and observing that his promises are *yea* and *amen*; she exclaimed, with all the fervour of which her sinking frame was capable: "He is not a man that he should lie; or the son of man that he should repent; is he, dear father?" turning her face toward her weeping parent, while love beamed from her languid eyes; "what a dear Saviour! Is he not, dear friends?" There was a sweet serenity, which made her emaciated countenance appear lovely, and her endearing expressions to all around her, evidenced the change within. A solemn stillness followed, when the writer was bowed in vocal supplication and thanksgiving in her behalf. She shortly after bade him a last farewell, in the mutual expression of a hope to meet again where the tempter cannot enter; where sorrow and sighing shall cease, and we shall no more say, "I am sick."

A very intimate female friend of hers, in whose arms she expired, has favoured the writer with the following interesting particulars: "The great change that was now evident, was truly

wonderful, and it might be said as of old, "stand still, and see the salvation of God;" for not much of *human* agency appeared to have been the cause of such extinction of self-righteousness, such unbounded love, such humble hope and confident faith in a dear Redeemer. Such a tender concern had she for her brother and sisters, that she repeated her dying injunctions in the following manner:—"My dear sister E——, attend to my dying words, perhaps I never shall speak to thee again—be kind and obedient to thy dear father and mother; do not, I charge thee, neglect going to meeting. Oh! that I had not neglected it so much! Don't do as I have done, my dear sister; put off gay clothes, and dress plainly. What are all the gaieties of a fleeting world, a dying hour can best show. Do all thou *knowest* to be right; we oftener err from *neglecting* what we *know*, than *not knowing*. Do not forget what I have said to thee at this awful moment, let it have weight when I am gone." She was now much exhausted, her cough was almost incessant, yet in the most severe suffering, she said,

"Jesus can make a dying-bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

Then putting her arm, as well as her weakness would permit, round her friend's neck, she said, "do not, my dear friend, weep for me, I am going to *my* father and *thy* father's house. We have had many pleasant hours together in this world. I was long a wanderer, but I trust we shall meet in that pleasant land of rest, to part no more." She then asked to hear the 12th chapter of Luke read, many passages of which afforded her subject for rejoicing, even in the extremity of pain; especially that one which begins, "Behold the lilies how they grow, &c." She said, "How consoling! how soothing! how have I lived so blind to the beauties, the excellencies of *this blessed Book*:" laying her hand on it as she spoke.

After an interval of most distressing convulsive coughing, in which she appeared departing, she revived and desired to see her brother, to whom she thus addressed herself:—"My dear brother, I wish once more to speak to thee before I die. Wilt thou remember all I have said to thee, when I am laid in the grave? Thy time, I know, is much occupied, but thou canst go to meeting on First-day afternoons. Use the plain language, and do not follow the evil course of those who live only for this world. Obey thy dear parents in all they desire of thee; they never will ask thee to do any thing but what is for thy advantage. Be a kind brother to thy sisters; Oh! always live in unity with them; and, my dear brother, *never forget that thou must one day die*; prepare for it in season, do not let thy last hour come as a thief in the night. I have had a sore trial, but my hope is in Him, in whom is no change. Dear brother, do not put it off as I have done; let me

be a warning to thee to begin early to seek the true friend of sinners, the sure help in time of need. Dear, dear G——, remember what I say, when this hour shall be passed. I have loved you all dearly, but O, how manifold is my love increased for you now ; how much better I love all my kind friends and the whole world than when in health. The hour of *death* is an *honest hour*." She was again much exhausted, but her least sister coming into the room, she desired to have her brought near her, and clasping her arms around her, thanked her for giving up so much of her time to her during her illness, and said, "I know the Lord will bless thee for it, thou art an innocent good girl now, O, mayst thou always remain so. Dear L——, farewell, farewell, remember thy sister." She then desired to hear the 5th chapter of Matthew ; and the words, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," were a balm to her mind. She said, "I have obtained mercy ; I cannot deceive myself now. Although I went from my blessed Saviour, his mercy never left me." Many other parts of the Holy Scriptures had her attention, even in the severest pain, for although her body was wasted to the extreme, yet did her mind retain its strength and clearness, and even increased in vigour as it approached the moment of final freedom. She spoke much at intervals of comparative ease, thanked her friends for all their kind attention to her, and, one remarking that it was an advantage to be with her, she said, "How thankful I am that I can be of use to any one ; it makes dying more easy, to think I am permitted to do a little good, and very little it is. Have I not come in at the eleventh hour, and can I presume to take the wages of the whole day ? But the blessed Lord of the harvest did freely give it to as great an idler as I. Oh, how wonderful are the mercies of the blessed, lowly Lamb of Life. All unworthy as I am, I yet will trust my all with him." Her pain now appeared very grievous, and her departure at hand. What she suffered, she said, was beyond expression, but she would endeavour to be patient. A friend said, she thought she could not suffer much more. "Oh," said she, "that is pleasant tidings ; but I will try to bear all : the Lord of Life bore with me long, very long." She often said,

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers," &c.

She asked her mother if she thought she had any thing more to do. "Tell me *now*," said she, "my strength will soon be quite gone." The friend, in whose arms she had, from the beginning of her serious illness, expressed a wish to die, she now desired to support her. "I will soon cease," said she, "to trouble my dear friends, and this is the greatest favour and the last I shall ask of thee." It was now about seven o'clock in the even-

ing, and her friend sat down behind her, not thinking her change quite so near. She still continued in that sweet confiding spirit; still, amid her severe agonies, expressed that fulness of love, which had been so great the last few days; and her friend observed her lips move, and could hear at intervals, words, as if in earnest prayer. She motioned to be raised up, which was done, and she faintly whispered, "Farewell, dear M——, again farewell. I—shall soon be at rest in Jesus." Her weeping friends now thought her gone; but she that held her, subduing her own emotion as much as possible, motioned them to be silent. Again the dear saint revived, and her mother thought perhaps she had but swooned, and brought her some water. She said, "No, dear mother, no more drink in this world," but wetting her lips with her own hands, to the surprise of her relatives and friends, repeated softly the following prayer as nearly as could be recollected. "Come, blessed JESUS, oh, come, and receive a poor penitent wanderer home—blessed JESUS! thou bleeding, dying Lamb, oh, come!—come with thy banner of salvation, and receive my departing soul! Oh, receive it to thy holy habitation, where it shall find peace and rest. And oh, thou God of Love, pardon all my transgressions against thee, and remember my sins no more. Be with me in this my hour of sore trial; shorten my sufferings, Heavenly Father, if it be thy blessed will. Yet I will try to be patient until my appointed time. Come, support me with thine out-stretched arm of love, and enable me to say, not my will, but thine be done. Of thy manifold mercies forgive all my shortcomings, blot out my many sins, and let my name be found written in the Lamb's book of Life. Come, blessed Jesus, give me the white robe, oh! give me the white robe, and be with me through the deep waters. Oh, make them shallow until I have clean passed over. Dear *Jesus*! forget me not, nor leave me while in the dark valley of the shadow of death. Let the light of thy countenance shine upon me now and for ever. Oh, come dear Jesus, come, take my departing spirit to thy holy habitation, those mansions, many mansions, in thy Father's house. Come, dear Jesus, come—receive my—departing spirit—receive—my—receive—my—my—soul."

After this exertion she sunk on the bosom that supported her dying frame. It was now 10 o'clock, and to the view of those present, she seemed to expire without a sigh: but, as if she had just beheld the glorious haven of rest, and still in the spirit of pure love for her friends, wished to comfort those who wept the privation of her society, (for she was in her life very pleasant to many,) she once more opened her eyes, and with a smile of celestial radiance, passing over her fixed features, said, very faintly, "Happy, happy, oh, how happy," and when she perceived she was understood, breathed no more. It is not in words to express

the solemnity of such a scene. It was as if the portals of heaven had opened to our view, and we had seen our loved friend enter the abode of happiness and peace. Long, long may the impression abide with all who were present, and be remembered as a monument of the unbounded love of Him who is the salvation of the world.*

What a striking evidence does it furnish of the mercy and goodness of the universal Parent of mankind, that he is sometimes pleased even in the last moments of life, to visit with the offers of redeeming love, the minds of such as have long been rebellious, and to pluck them as brands from the burning. But how unsafe is it to trust to a death-bed repentance! How extremely unwise to defer the concerns of eternity to a dying hour! By continuing to slight the repeated visitations of Divine grace, we may be given over to a hard heart and reprobate mind: nor do we know that we shall have an hour, nay, a moment to prepare! At midnight the cry may be heard, "Behold! the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him." How important then that all should be careful in their very early years, and as they grow up, and advance in life, to mind the reproofs of instruction in their own breasts! they are known to be the way of life, divine life to the soul. This *something*, though you may know not what it is, that checks you in secret for evil, both before and after you yield to temptation; warning you beforehand, not to touch or taste, and afterwards condemning you if you do so; and inwardly inclining you to a life of religion and virtue; this is the very thing dear young people, whereby God worketh in you to will and to do; and by which he will, if you cleave to it, and work with it, enable you to work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling before him.—Despise it not, do no violence to its motions; love it, cherish it, reverence it, hearken to its pleadings with you; give up without delay to its requirings, and obey its teachings. It is God's messenger for good to your immortal souls: its voice in your streets, is truly the voice of his beloved Son Jesus Christ: its call is a kind invitation to you, from the throne of Grace, to come under his peaceful government and faithfully serve him. Hear it, and it will lead you; obey it, and it will save you from the power of sin and Satan; it will bring you into his sheepfold, and finally introduce you to an inheritance incorruptible in the mansions of rest, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

* Her decease occurred the 13th day of the 19th mo. 1816.

REMARKS
ON
THE DOCTRINE
OF THE
INFLUENCE
OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT,



PHILADELPHIA:

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REMARKS, &c.

THE influence of the Spirit of Truth on the mind, has been maintained by the most eminent and pious persons in all ages, and to it they have attributed their stability and advancement in true religion. This is strong presumptive evidence that it is consistent with the doctrine contained in the Scriptures, but more especially in the New Testament; and ought to render us doubly careful, that we do not reject it without due examination. Notwithstanding, there is a class of persons professing Christianity, who consider this gift to have been shed only on the primitive believers, and that any belief in its existence in the present day, is irrational and enthusiastic.

On viewing the objections of those who profess to deny the influence of the Spirit, the following considerations present themselves:—That the effusion of the Holy Spirit was announced by the Prophets who foretold the coming of our Lord, and promulgated by his precursor, John, (Matthew, iii. 1–12. Mark, i. 1–8. John, i. 29–33,) as a distinguishing circumstance attending the introduction of the gospel; which shows it to have been an *integral* part of that dispensation, and that it must therefore continue till the dispensation is abrogated; which cannot in common reason be denied.

That we are supported in this opinion, by a reference to the intention for which this gift was dispensed to mankind; which, it appears by Scripture testimony, was for the purpose of assisting man in the work of regeneration; (John, iii. 1–8,) and which assistance must be equally necessary now, as his weakness and liability to sin and transgression remain unchanged.

That, though the effusion of the Spirit upon many of the primitive believers, was attended with extraordinary gifts, to forward the purposes of the Divine will in the establishment of the gospel, yet it was not universally so; but appeared in the great mass of the early believers, in the same way as it is believed to appear in the present day; not being attended with extraordinary gifts, but producing the effects of righteousness.

That the fruits of the Spirit cannot be different from, or contradictory to what is asserted in the Scriptures; and therefore a belief in its influence on the mind, cannot be enthusiastic or irrational, though it may be misunderstood and abused.

A few brief observations on these points may be useful to such readers as have not been accustomed to consider this subject with reference to the objections stated.

It is undoubtedly the object of true religion to purify the heart and conduct, so as to render us worthy of the divine acceptance; and the enjoyment of a state of bliss hereafter; or, in other words, of an admission into the kingdom of heaven; but, in order to this, we must in this life have undergone that change of our nature, which will in some degree assimilate us to the divine purity; the necessity of which is fully stated in the Scriptures. In the emphatic language of our Saviour, it is called being born again; and the same process is variously named in different parts of the New Testament. (Eph. iv. 15-30, v. 8-21.) This change, conscious as we must be of sin and imperfection, must be allowed to be fully consistent with our ideas of what is reasonable and correct; but when it assumes the shape of a divine revelation, we are not permitted to doubt of its *necessity*. The sayings of our Lord, as well as the writings of his Apostles, fully confirm it. In that conversation which he had with Nicodemus, memorable for its deep instruction in religious truth, this change is ascribed to the operation of the Spirit; and it must be effected by the same means to the end of time; our natural state being the same it has always been.

His discourse with the woman of Samaria (John, iv. 5-26,) points out a living principle, to be given by him, which was to produce eternal life to its possessor; and with this there is a remarkable coincidence, in his declaration on the last great day of the feast, which the Evangelist expressly declares to allude to the gift of the Spirit, which was to be shed after he was glorified. (John, vii. 37-39.) The parable of the man and his friend, (Luke, xi. 5-13,) is equally clear as to the divine intention in this respect; and that we ought, moreover, earnestly to desire it. And it may be here asked, as we are by nature so prone to sin, how are we to root out our evil propensities, but by some assistance *different* in its nature and purpose? What but this must enable us to take up the daily cross to our natural inclinations? to deny ourselves the pleasures of sense, or the allurements of interest, when they are inconsistent with purity? The deficient practice of all mankind, while they have not their dependence on Divine aid, is a clear answer to these questions; for however fair the outward conduct may appear, if the source of action—the heart, be not purified, which it can only be through the operation of Divine power, it only wants the storms of temptation to overthrow the

fabric; and, as the nature of sin is the same in all, though its modification may be various, so we are all equally in need of this assistance—the learned, with the ignorant—the philosopher, with the peasant.

Persons possessed of good natural dispositions, and placed in situations favourable to regular conduct, may have a sort of habitual morality, which leaves us nothing to accuse them of; but let them not suppose themselves secure on that account. That virtue which is not the effect of principle is of very uncertain duration; and we are *all* required to *improve* our talents and advantages. We ought also to remember, that Christianity goes upon the necessity of a *change* of our nature and affections, as the only sure means of producing conduct consistent with the purity of its precepts, under all circumstances; even where our private interests and inclinations may be opposed to it. The work of religion, if properly undertaken, is sure in its end; but it is of gradual, and sometimes, from the prevalence of our lusts, of painful operation; and, if our minds are sufficiently awakened to the subject, none will find time for idleness or self-security.

In those sublime and instructive conversations which our Saviour had with his disciples, a short time previous to his suffering, (John, xiv. 15–27, xv. xvi. 1–14, and xvii.) as well as in that ever-memorable prayer he offered up for them, he has shown that the great purpose of his mission was to reveal the way of Truth, and to establish a spiritual communion and communication with himself and the Father, through the Holy Spirit, for our help and direction in the way of righteousness. The necessity of *keeping up* this communication, in order to the production of fruit, is beautifully and incontrovertibly set forth, in the parable of the Vine and the Branches. This Spirit, he also declared, was to lead into all truth, and to reprove *the world* of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; thus comprehending every thing that can relate to salvation, or the knowledge of God. These declarations are in themselves decisive; and, as they are elucidated by the Apostles, they become further confirmed. The manner in which they have reasoned on the operations of the Spirit, and declared its effects, clearly show, that to it was attributed their progress in the Christian life. For, though some had extraordinary gifts for the service of the Church, as appears by 1 Cor. chap. xii, yet these being for specific purposes, could not be expected to be possessed by all. But the Apostle says, “*the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*” This shows its *general* intention, with respect to mankind at large. And

the extraordinary gifts he enumerates had ultimately the same tendency, by an unusual display of Divine power, to strike conviction on the mind of the most unenlightened, as well as to remove the opposition and prejudices of the Jews, who had become so much attached to the ritual of the law, that it was with difficulty they would admit the evidence of a religion so pure and spiritual as Christianity.

It is remarkable, in the chapter just named, as well as in that which immediately follows, how earnestly the Apostle recommends them to covet the *best* gifts, in contradistinction to those which were extraordinary; and concludes by showing what he calls "a more excellent way," pointing out the possession of charity, as comprehending the substance of Christianity, to be a transcendent object of attainment; without which, all other qualifications, how extraordinary soever, are of no value: and in continuation, in the next chapter, the xivth, he shows, by a course of strong and clear reasoning, the superiority of the gift of prophecy, or speaking to edification, exhortation, and comfort, over that of speaking with tongues; which further confirms the opinion, that the direct and permanent object of spiritual gifts, was the establishment of righteousness. It is therefore quite consistent with sound reason to conclude, that after Christianity was firmly established, the miraculous gifts would be withdrawn; an opinion which is without detriment to the continuation of those gifts, which remain to be necessary in the constitution of a Christian church. Hence gospel ministry, as well as other qualifications for the spiritual service of the church, must continue to be derived from the same source; and is therefore not dependent on human learning or attainments, though our usefulness may be increased by the possession of them. Nor let any one suppose that this opinion leads to enthusiasm or self-exaltation. Spiritual gifts are not at our command, and no man receives them who is not promoting the work of redemption in his own mind; and as every step he takes in advance, must be preceded and followed by a perception of his own imperfection and unworthiness, it must have a constant tendency to produce *humility*, meekness, and gentleness: and if these effects are not produced, such a person is deceiving himself. A due degree of earnestness and fervency in our religious duties, is, however, very proper; and must necessarily follow an advancement in the knowledge and love of God.

It appears, therefore, that those who ascribe pride or enthusiasm to a belief in this doctrine, have a mistaken view of it. Perhaps they have never examined the writings of the Evan-

gelists and Apostles with sufficient attention, or have been misled by a strong attachment to preconceived opinions, which may have been inculcated in early youth.

It is not unusual for such persons to ask for definitions and explanations on this subject, which from its nature cannot be given. We may be very sure of a thing which we feel, though we may fail in defining that feeling to the satisfaction of another, who is not inclined to admit it. Our own experience teaches us, how slowly we admit an outward fact, when the mind is foreclosed against it; much more, things of a less tangible nature. To such persons it may be observed, that those impressions which are not received into the mind *through the medium of the outward senses*, are not in their nature capable of explanation, except by their effects; in the same way, as many of our common feelings can only be explained by a reference to similar feelings in others. We feel the influence of the Spirit of Truth, reproving us for the evil of our thoughts and conduct, and constraining us to aspire after greater purity of life and manners; and humbling us under a sense of our weakness and imperfections; and having this feeling, we know that it exists, although the exact way of its operation may be difficult to define, to those who are indisposed to acknowledge the same influence. We also find it conformable to those descriptions of its nature and effects, which we meet with in the New Testament. Our Saviour's words to Nicodemus seem to confirm these opinions: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Those, therefore, who would deprive Christianity of its spiritual character, would deprive it of what is its distinguishing and superior recommendation. For from this cause alone can arise that uniform and exemplary morality, which is the possession only of inward worth, and of a mind purified on Christian principle, (Romans, viii. 1-17. 1 Cor. ii. 9-16. Gal. v. 16-26.) Any person who will attentively read the New Testament, must be convinced, if plain evidence will do it, that the religion taught by Christ is spiritual in its nature, and must therefore have a spiritual *ministration*. (Col. i. 21-29.) It cannot be supposed, when we consider those pathetic illustrations of the paternal regard of our Creator, which have been given by Christ in his discourses, that our Almighty Parent would require from us a degree of purity which he would not enable us to attain. Indeed there is no adequate reason, unless the fault be on our part, why the effusion of the Holy Spirit should be attended

with less power now, miraculous gifts apart, than it was in the days of the primitive Christians. Though all men have sufficient illumination to guide their steps in the pursuit of Truth, yet if they are not sincerely* disposed to follow it, they must be deficient in that degree of faith which is necessary to the full influence of the Spirit. It is easy for a man to say he is a Christian, being so by profession; but amongst the primitive believers, no man would assume the name who was not so in heart; since he had a test of his sincerity always ready, in the scorn of unconverted friends, and the abuse of a prejudiced and hard-hearted people. Nothing, therefore, but a conviction of the truth of Christianity, and the consequent obligation to obey its precepts, could induce him to embrace a profession, which carried with it so many circumstances mortifying to human nature. The same sincerity of conversion would in the present day produce the same effects, in the assistance and communion of the Holy Spirit, in that degree which our particular situation might require in the sight of divine wisdom. I would ask any person of sound understanding, if it would seem consistent with the divine intention, to introduce a gift attended with so many extraordinary circumstances, and sanctioned by the descent of the Son of God, if it were intended to be withdrawn with the first believers, who form so small a part of his rational creation? Such an opinion seems irreconcilable with the *undiminished* power, the wisdom, the justice, and the beneficence of God. But on this, as well as every other question connected with our well-being, the sacred volume is sufficiently clear to common understandings; and a disbelief in any of the fundamental principles of Christianity, if examined into, would be found frequently to arise from a disinclination to submit to those salutary privations which it requires; but which are at the same time the only certain evidence of our faith and love to God. Let us not, therefore, deceive ourselves: if our salvation be wrought out, it can only be by those means which he has appointed. And if it should appear by the Scriptures, that it must be effected through the influence and assistance of the Spirit, it is in vain for us to seek out another way. Sincerity and true devotedness are only wanting on our part, to be effectual through the divine promises, for the production of all the beneficial consequences, so strikingly expressed in various parts of the Scripture. This divine instructor would wound as only to heal, and, as we yielded to its reproofs, would often

* The evidence of sincerity is, obedience to the divine law, so far as we know
See James, ii. 14 to 17.

draw our minds into retirement and prayer for the pardon of our transgressions, and for assistance more fully to obey the divine will; and finally establish that communion between the soul of man and his God, which our Saviour largely testified of, (John, xiv, xv, xvi. Ephes. ii. 16-22,) and which, whether in public assemblies, or in private retirement, must be the medium of divine communication and worship: and if continued in, we should in our spiritual progress undoubtedly experience the truth of the prophetic declaration: "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isa. xlii. 16.)

A gospel Minister relates, that in the course of his travels in America, a cavilling person denied that the Divine light and spirit was in every one; and affirmed that it was not in the Indians, some of whom were present: whereupon, said he, I called an Indian to us, and asked him, whether or no, when he did lie, or do wrong to any one, there was not something in him that did reprove him for it? He said there was such a thing in him, that did so reprove him; and he was ashamed, when he had done wrong, or spoken wrong.—*George Fox's Journal* vol. ii. p. 161.

A sea captain, well known in Philadelphia, being on the point of going on ship-board, felt his mind so impressed with uneasiness, that he could not proceed, and resigned the command. All he could say on the occasion was, that he was not easy to go, and the event proved he was right in adhering to the restraint; for the vessel was lost, as is supposed, being never heard of after touching at Batavia.

Such monitory checks appear distinct from volition and reflection: many, mistaking them for the natural emotions of the mind, entirely slight them, though they cannot be accounted for on that ground; it being indeed absurd to suppose that human nature, depraved as it is, counteracts its own propensities; and still more so, to impute to it a predictive power. Those who believe that all mankind are equally the objects of Divine Benevolence, will find no difficulty in ascribing to that "true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world," (John, i. 9,) all such intimations as tend to preserve us from evil, and to increase our dependence on the providential care of the gracious Author of our being, "the Father of lights and of spirits."—*George Dillwyn.*

SHORT
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

OF

SAMUEL EMLLEN, JAMES PEMBERTON,
DANIEL BOWLY, JUNR. THOMAS RUTTER,
AND
JOB THOMAS.



PHILADELPHIA :

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No. 16.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES, &c.

SAMUEL EMLLEN, of Philadelphia, a descendant of one of the early settlers of Pennsylvania, was born in the year 1730.—He enjoyed the advantages of the best education which his native city then afforded; and possessing a vigorous mind, naturally quick in its perceptions, and a memory uncommonly retentive, he made considerable proficiency in literary acquirements. From his own account, he was assailed in his youthful days, by frequent temptations to wander from the paths of virtue, but through the pious care of his friends, and more especially by the secret restraining influences of Divine grace, he was happily preserved from any gross evil. As he advanced toward the period of manhood, his love for religion and those who were living examples of its precious efficacy, increased, and by yielding obedience to the operation of the Holy Spirit in his own mind, he grew in Christian experience. Having the prospect of a competency, he early declined trade, and cheerfully devoted his time to pursuits and services of a religious nature.

He was a lively and evangelical minister, sound in the faith of the gospel, adorning the doctrine which he preached by a holy conversation and consistent walking among men. Animated by the love of God, and an earnest desire faithfully to occupy the gift committed to his trust, he was frequently engaged in religious visits among his brethren. Besides travelling over many parts of this continent, he was once in the island of Barbadoes, and seven times crossed the ocean to preach the gospel in Europe. His knowledge of several languages, his peculiar aptness in pertinently applying and explaining the Sacred Writings, his unaffected, engaging deportment, and affability of manners, joined to an innocent cheerfulness, made way for him among the great of this world and with foreigners, and endeared him to all who enjoyed the privilege of his society. When in company with those who moved in the higher walks of life, it appeared to be his greatest concern to impress their minds with a conviction of the superior benefits to be derived from a life of holiness, and the comparative emptiness and vanity of the transitory honours and enjoyments of this world, often declaring that he was neither a bigot nor a sectarian, but a lover of all those who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. In various places which were the scenes of his religious labours, he left many seals of his ministry; being a lively instance of the redeeming virtue of that grace which he preached to others, not using the word of God deceitfully, but manifesting its power by meekness, humility, and love unfeigned.

Being himself a pattern of Christian simplicity and self-denial,

he often found it his duty to reprove the libertine professors of religion, who conformed themselves to the vain fashions, customs and opinions of the world, or were eagerly pursuing its fading riches to the neglect of their religious duties. He possessed a mind peculiarly qualified for consolatory visits among the afflicted, evincing a tender sympathy for them under their sufferings whether of body or mind, and devoting a large portion of his time to this truly benevolent and christian employment. In his social intercourse among his friends, he often appeared to take but little interest in the conversation upon ordinary topics; but when it turned upon religious subjects, he became animated, manifesting by godly converse, and pious devotion to his Master's cause, that his principal delight was in the law of the Lord, and his meditations therein both frequent and fervent. He was diligent in the perusal of the holy scriptures, familiarly acquainted with most parts of them, and eminently versed in some of the prophetic writings, and in the latter years of his life was in the practice of having them read to him, after he had retired to rest.

His constitution was naturally delicate, and his bodily infirmities gradually increased upon him, so that in his declining years, he suffered much pain—yet he continued lively and cheerful in spirit, and when health permitted, was as industrious as ever, in promoting the great cause of righteousness, knowing, as he expressed, that he must shortly put off this earthly tabernacle. In the 8th month, 1799, he thought himself sensible of a slight paralytic affection; but his health was, shortly after, so much improved, that he experienced little interruption in his accustomed employ of calling upon his friends and visiting the abodes of affliction and sorrow. In the twelfth month, the gouty spasms to which he was subject, returned with increased violence; but on the 15th of that month he attended a religious meeting, and delivered a lively testimony to the audience—finding himself ill, he leaned, through weakness, upon the railing of the minister's gallery and repeated pathetically those beautiful lines of Addison, viz.

“My life, if thou preserv'st my life,
Thy sacrifice shall be;
And death, if death should be my doom,
Shall join my soul to thee.”

The meeting was then broken up; he was assisted into a neighbouring house, and after he recovered a little, was conveyed home, but was well enough to attend meeting again on the following third day. In this last, he preached largely upon the excellency of that faith which had been his shield, commenting upon the text, “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” In the latter part of the week, his spasms re-

turned so frequently, and with such violence, that he was urged by his physician to confine himself to his house; and he went out no more. On one occasion, while two of his fellow-ministers were with him, he was attacked by a fit of acute pain, during the extremity of which, he evinced the calm serenity and confiding trust of his mind, by saying, "I have a comfortable hope that my spirit will be reposed in the bosom of Jesus." When his sufferings had abated a little, he thus addressed them, "Remember, ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." In alluding to the care taken of him by his children and those about him, he said, "I deem their sympathy and affectionate attendance upon me, a blessing from heaven, for which God will bless *them*."

During his wakeful hours, the glorious attributes of that God whom he had so long served, were almost his perpetual theme. He repeatedly declared the power, mercy and goodness of the Most High to his soul, and in reverent acknowledgment of the rich consolations with which he was supported, often made use of these words, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more, and I will cast all their sins behind my back." At one time he exclaimed with much tenderness of spirit, "Ye shall have a song as in the night, when a holy solemnity is kept, and gladness of heart as when one goeth with a pipe, to come in to the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel. Oh, the tears of holy joy, which flow down my cheeks! Sing praises, high praises unto my God! I feel nothing in my way. Although my conduct through life has not been in every respect, so guarded as it might have been, yet the main bent of my mind has been to serve thee, O God, who art glorious in holiness, fearful in praises. I have, I am sure, loved godliness and hated iniquity—my petitions to the throne of grace have been accompanied with faith."

On first day, the 29th of 12th month, (which was the day before his decease,) he was cheerful and pleasant in conversation, expressing himself very affectionately toward many of his dear friends in different parts of the world, with fervent breathings to the God of all grace, for their preservation and growth in vital religion, desiring a friend who was with him, to mention to some, that he felt a portion of that love for them which is stronger than death. A person who called to visit him remarked, that the frame of his mind seemed as serene and peaceful as could be conceived of a spirit on the verge of a happy immortality.

About ten o'clock, he retired to bed, comparatively free from pain, but in a short time had a very violent return of it, and after the common means of alleviation had been unsuccessfully tried, he desired that nothing more might be done; saying, "All I want

is heaven; Lord, receive my spirit!" He requested those about him to unite in prayer that he might be preserved in patience to the end; adding, "My pain is great; my God, grant me patience, humble, depending patience." Presently after, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." With great fervency he then repeated a considerable part of the Lord's prayer, and added, "Oh, how precious a thing it is to feel the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits that we are his." Soon after, he said, "Oh, this soul is an awful thing—I feel it so—you who hear me, mind, it is an awful thing to die—the invisible world, how awful!" His end was now fast approaching; the conflicts of mortality were about to terminate in the glorious fruition of eternal life, and, as if he had already begun to enjoy the foretaste of endless felicity, he said, "I earnestly intreat that nothing be done to me, except what I may request, that my mind may not be diverted; that my whole mind may be centered in aspirations to the throne of grace."

About three o'clock in the morning he inquired the time, and being told it, he replied, "the conflict will be over before five." Shortly after he prayed fervently, "Almighty Father, come quickly, if it be thy holy will, and receive my spirit." He lay still awhile, the conflict being apparently over, but as if sensible again of the clogs of mortality, he said in a low voice, "I thought I was gone," adding, "Christ Jesus, receive my spirit." These worthy words, so peculiarly adapted to the awful occasion, were the last which this pious Christian uttered. Soon after, he sweetly and quietly departed this life, in peace with God and with all men. He died about half past four o'clock, on the morning of the 30th of the 12th month, 1799, in the seventieth year of his age.

JAMES PEMBERTON, a native of Philadelphia, deceased in the eighty-sixth year of his age, on the 9th day of the second month, 1809. He had employed a long life in various occupations of usefulness and active benevolence. To the service of the society of Friends, of which he was a member, he devoted a large portion of his time; his love for the cause of truth, his unusual assiduity in what he undertook, and his long experience, exercised and used in the fear of his Creator, contributed to make him eminent. Nor was he circumscribed by the limits of his own religious society. More public objects of service to his fellow men, also engaged his attention, and had his assistance in their promotion. He was a strenuous supporter of the measures taken for the abolition of the slave trade, and the relief of the black people, and was president of the Pennsylvania Society for improving their condition. In early life, before the revolu-

tion had introduced our present form of government, he was for many years, a member of the colonial assembly of Pennsylvania as representative for his native city. In short, his life appears to have been usefully and honourably spent, and he descended calmly to the borders of the grave; yet, in contemplating an awful eternity, he dared not to trust his hopes of everlasting felicity upon any of his past works of righteousness. All his dependence was upon his Saviour, and this dependence he found to be an anchor to his soul. As he felt himself gradually declining, he looked back over the number of years which he had passed—compared with the boundless existence before him, they appeared but as a moment, yet he perceived them to have been marked with so many preservations, that his gratitude was afresh excited to his almighty Benefactor and Preserver.

A short time previous to his decease, he had a fainting fit. After recovering from it, he remarked how awful it was to be on the verge of eternity. "But," continued he, "we have a Mediator, an Intercessor. My mind has, for some time past, been unusually impressed with the vast *importance* of the *Redeemer's mediation*. I have never before seen it with the same clearness. I am free from pain of body or mind. The prospect of my change is awful; but after all, *I have nothing to trust to, but the merits of my REDEEMER.*"—The next day he said to Thomas Scattergood, "I am thankful that, through divine mercy, I feel an evidence within me, that I am not cast off. It has been the great desire of my life, that at the solemn close, I might be favoured to feel *that* evidence. It was all that I wished. It seems to me that I cannot continue long; but I desire to wait patiently; and to labour after a perfect resignation to the divine will. The longer I live, I see more clearly that it is not moral righteousness that will do for man. *Nothing but the righteousness of Christ will avail us. We can claim nothing from our own merits. We owe all to divine mercy.*"

Near two weeks after this, he said to a friend, who asked him how he was, "I am on the confines of eternity, and find nothing in my way; but all is mercy, mercy!"—Two days after this, after a time of silence, he exclaimed, "Oh the blessing of an easy mind! who can describe it. It is all owing to divine mercy, to nothing else; and this, I hope, I enjoy." In the same day, he addressed a grandson, who was with him, in the following pathetic language—"I have often been thinking, that whenever any suitable opportunity should offer, I would unburthen my mind to thee. And it has now arisen in me to address thee with the words of king David to his son, formerly, 'Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father. Serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. If thou seek him, he will be

found of thee, but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.' And what a dismal state is this : to be cast off from the presence of that Being, who is the greatest friend of mankind ! Nothing can be more dreadful ! These expressions, I remember, when young, were addressed to me by a very worthy friend, John Evans, of North Wales, in a letter he wrote to me on the death of my father. I wish thee to impress them deeply on thy mind, and thou wilt find them useful after I am gone. It is impossible to estimate the advantage of living under divine protection ; his mercy and goodness are incalculable."

In the evening of the same day, when his children and grandchildren were around him, he addressed them in an instructive manner upon several subjects. After recommending his family to live in harmony, he remarked, "My dear father was a very upright man. As occasion offered he gave advice to us, his children ; and one of his most frequent admonitions, and which made very great impression on me in early life, was, To live in the fear of the Lord. It is the beginning of wisdom. It is indeed wisdom, and it is founded on love, as those whom we love, we must fear to offend. If this principle is attended to through life, you will not fear when the solemn period shall come—all will be peace. David, speaking of Almighty Providence, says, that his mercy endureth for ever. His mercy has indeed no end, no end. His goodness has followed me ; and I have been favoured in my present indisposition, much more than I had any reason to expect, and much more than I had deserved. I recommend to you, the diligent perusal of the holy scriptures—make yourselves acquainted with them. In them you will find an abundant source of instruction and edification. Reading the lives of pious men of former ages, and observing how they were supported under their trials by the divine arm, tend very powerfully to place our dependence upon Him from whom comes all our support—all our benefits ; and to whom it is impossible to make a sufficient return for his inestimable goodness. My parents took great pains with me, and I received very great advantages from the constant and unwearied care of a most affectionate mother."

The following day he said to a friend, "It is a great consolation to be free from a guilty conscience at such an hour as this ; and that, I believe, I am. We have all fallen short, far short, of the glory of God, but we are under His mercy who careth for us. There is one thing which is not enough inculcated in our meetings, *the mediatorship of the Son*, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ : and I have never seen this so manifested as in my present indisposition." He then adduced some texts of scripture relating to this subject, with remarks on them ; as, "No man cometh to the Father but by me," &c. : It is a great mercy, said

he, that God, in his wisdom hath appointed *such wonderful means* for the redemption of mankind. We have a High Priest, touched with a feeling of our infirmities. Not such a high priest as is ordained by man, but a High Priest who is really touched with a feeling of our infirmities. *This mediation of the Son with the Father, is a great mystery.*" The following evening, on being assisted in getting into bed, he exclaimed, "How many hundreds and thousands there are now sick in the world, and have nobody to assist them, and I have so many; how am I loaded with blessings!" On the succeeding day he observed, "Never was I more convinced of the goodness of Redeeming Love." His close was now perceptibly hastening, so that he expressed a doubt of surviving the night of the 7th of 2d month; but on the 8th he seemed a little revived, and thus expressed himself to his surviving child, "As I draw nearer to my close, I find the tormenting fear of death taken away, *through the intercession of the great Mediator between God and man.*—I am very low, but not so low but I can yet commemorate the incomprehensible mercies of an all-gracious God." To a particular friend he said, "Oh that I had strength, that I had the strength of an angel, that I might declare the goodness of the Lord to me; but——eternity's too short to utter all his praise. The Redeemer has said, I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me. And he told his disciples before he suffered, not to be troubled: 'Ye have believed on my Father, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you.' He is, indeed, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. What a blessed company are already gone there before me! I feel the time of my own departure draw nigh."—On taking leave of his friend, he said, "I love thee and all them that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Farewell." These were the last words which he spoke upon religious subjects. On the following day he peacefully put off mortality.

DANIEL BOWLY, Junr. of Cirencester, England, was a young man of good understanding and an amiable disposition, the pliability of which, together with an employment which exposed him to much temptation, promoted, though it did not sanction, a wide deviation in conduct from those religious principles in which he had been educated. Of the impropriety of this deviation he became fully sensible during the course of a long illness; which he often acknowledged to be a mercy from that Divine Providence, whose fatherly care had many times preserved him from sudden death when unprepared. In the commencement of his disorder, which was consumption, his mind appeared to be deeply affected

with the danger of his situation, though he then expressed but little of his feelings. As his weakness increased, he remarked how exceedingly awful the prospect of a final change appeared; he earnestly desired that he might know a preparation for eternity, and that when the hour of death arrived, the divine presence might be near. His past conduct he said had been very erroneous, but his supplication for forgiveness had been attended with such sweet refreshment, that he hoped it might be according to his desires.—At other times, his sins appeared so great, that he could hardly entertain a hope it would be well with him. “What can be expected,” said he, “from a death-bed repentance? That is a time when all would gladly be saved. There will not probably be an opportunity given me of proving my sincerity, by an amendment of life, so that men may doubt it, but the Omniscient Being knoweth how far I am sincere, and I hope if it really be so, it will be accepted by him: yet there is nothing equal to a proper dedication of time in health.”

Another time, he said, “I hope the Almighty will forgive my sins. It is mercy alone that can save me, who have devoted so much of my life to business, and the amusements of this world—pleasure, as it is generally called; but it is a strange sort of pleasure—It is pain—I feel it pain.” In another opportunity, he said, “What I have to deliver, is from a prospect of the awfulness of death, which in a short time, will be my lot. Mankind in general are certainly under strong delusion; yet how kindly the Almighty condescends, from time to time, to give a degree of his light and help. But man may outlive this day of grace, which, *through the merciful mediation of my dear Saviour*, is now extended to me.”

At another time, appearing much distressed, he desired his sister to read a chapter in the Bible to him; after which, he broke forth in earnest and pathetic exhortation to those present, to prepare for death whilst time and health were afforded; saying, that during the reading, a little encouragement had been given for himself, and that he believed it was for some one present, he had been so tried, adding, “I long that my friends would begin the work of religion in the life of it, for if the first offers are slighted, Oh, how does the visitation deaden on the mind! It appears to me as though my own redemption is now nearly completed, and that I may be detained here for the good of others; and I hope if there be any thing to be done, the Almighty will enable me to do it.”

Again, he remarked, “I believe the Almighty detains me here as an example of his great mercy, and as a warning to some; but I earnestly entreat that none will depend upon the same singular act of mercy. All the friendships of this world must be given

up ; and if the mind be not illuminated with an immediate proof of the presence of our dear Saviour, yet it should be resigned and prepare itself for the reception thereof, by a surrender of every thing which does not appear consistent with a state of preparation." Another time, he said, "I hope I am not hardened or insensible of my state—I have earnestly supplicated for repentance, and have sometimes experienced something like touching the hem of the garment, but not quite so either, as *that* was fully efficacious, but this lasted only for a time, and I seemed again left. In the forepart of my illness, a few times, I asked for recovery, if consistent with the divine will, with desires to be strengthened to lead a different life from my past, and serve that good Master, *whose doctrines* I have, as it were, trampled under foot ; but I have since seen the favour it may be to me to be taken from such a trial." Again, he remarked, "How earnestly do I wish my near connexions may keep to the truth. Though the path may appear hard at first, yet as they follow their Leader with a single eye, it will become more easy. There may be times of withdrawing of the Divine presence, and then the enemy will seek to enter ; but, by earnest supplication, preservation will be granted, and at times a comforting foretaste of future happiness ; and the prospect of getting every day nearer to such an incomprehensible reward, is a favour beyond expression. How little satisfaction results from a life of pleasure, attending places of diversion, &c. Ah, the disappointments such meet with ! I believe bitter portions are often their lot."

One morning, inquiring if to-morrow would not be the meeting day, and being answered in the affirmative, he added, "I almost long to go. How pleasant is the thought of being retired there from the world, when the generality of the people are in the height of its engagements ! How foolish and unwise are men who are bartering their souls for gold, paltry gold ! The too eager pursuit of it is a great hurt to some of our society. If I were to recover, and found business stood in my way to peace of mind, I think I would give it up entirely, or do but little and live accordingly. What signifies grandeur or curious food !" A friend asking him how he did, he replied, "I am very weak, but I hope I shall be willing to bear every thing the Almighty may be pleased to lay upon me, so that I can but just get within the gates of peace." At another time, "I wish I had served my dear Saviour in my health ; Oh, he is a kind master ! How much time have I lost—how distressing must be the situation of those who are sleeping the sleep of death, until the last trumpet be sounded in their ears."

Several of his friends being in the chamber one evening, he spoke of the gift of grace which is dispensed to all, even a por-

tion of the Holy Spirit of Christ which influences our hearts and manifests our duty, and he recommended an immediate obedience to its discoveries—"for," said he, "since these illuminations are not at our command, it is very unsafe to trifle with them by giving way to the suggestions of the enemy, but rather resign whatever may be called for. Can we not return a part to him who gave the whole? What if it deprive us of a few luxuries? We can have but food and raiment, which only differ a little in kind between rich and poor!"—"Our profession," said he, "is a very exalted one, and if we kept to it, would make us as lights in the world. Our religion teaches us to believe in immediate communication with God, through his beloved Son, which is an unspeakable privilege to all who attend to it, and wonderful condescension, that He who is Lord of all, should thus notice poor man, and time after time, be visiting with the offers of his mercy, to ensure our happiness: [such] visitations we should be very careful not to reject, as being a common favour, and think we will accept them at some future time; for though the Almighty is long-forbearing and delighteth in mercy, we know not when may be the last offer of his grace to assist us in the work of salvation—what a dreadful thing would it be to withstand the last!"

Speaking of the evidence he had of his future peace, he said, "I have a clear view that I shall be received into the kingdom of rest and peace. I see the gates of heaven standing open to receive me, and thousands of the just waiting to embrace me! I desire but just to get within the pales of safety, to be in the presence of the Lord, and to behold his glorious countenance. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? CHRIST *taketh away the sting of death.* My dear Saviour is reconciled to me. I know he is. His mercy is very great. I cannot speak enough of his mercy." Some one remarking how exceeding quickly the last three weeks had passed away, he replied, "Yes, and perhaps there are some who have not done any thing in the time; which is a serious consideration, for in one week a man may be taken sick and die—and if we do not close in with the visitations of God, in time, we shall be lost for ever." Again, "Let us be earnest in making ready for the glorious kingdom of rest and peace; where, O that we may enter—and all *may if they will.* Let us endeavour to do a little every day; let none be discouraged, though their progress in religion may be slow, yet, let them keep on in their little way: for I believe our kind Saviour may at times withdraw his sensible presence from us, to try how our faith will continue."

To his sisters, he said, "Be religious, and then you will have our Saviour's arm to lean upon. Oh, he is a merciful Saviour! I have found him such; an easy master, a kind friend. Ah, how

I regret that I neglected serving him some years. I believe great advantages may arise from frequently comparing time with eternity—an awful eternity. It appears to me exceedingly awful. Heaven and hell are placed before us—we have now our choice.” He afterwards uttered the following short ejaculation, “Oh Lord God Almighty, be thou pleased to look down upon and be with us.”—He cautioned some of his friends to beware of the incumbrances of business, saying, “It will not do for those who have been all the week in the hurry of business, to go to meetings and appear before the Lord in form only. They must *daily* give up their minds to him; daily retire to worship him. A man whose mind is wholly engrossed in business, may go to meetings pretty constantly, and sit there two hours; yet it is to be feared his thoughts will be engaged upon *that* which takes up the greater part of his time; and if it be so, it is a great mockery of God. I know a man ought to provide for his family, and carry on a proper business, which I believe to be right; but it should by no means be the first object, for riches will be nothing in the end. What would I *now* give for all the world? Nothing at all. I don’t regard what the natural man may advance in opposition to this doctrine of giving up all for the sake of religion. I am now upon the brink of death to the body, but opening into the life of the spirit. I am going to live for ever, and I am certain nothing will do, but giving up every earthly obstruction for the cause of God. Make him a sacrifice—offer up all you have—offer up your lives to him, as *Christ did his for your sakes and mine.*” Speaking to one of his sisters, he said, “How many times have I been preserved from death—times more than I can remember! Ah, how often have some of us been raised, as it were, from death. We should often think of it, and how we have answered the kind intention. It may not be so again—the next, may be the last time. Then do let us begin to prepare, and do every thing that is required of us. I believe plainness of dress is—Plainness of dress is as a hedge about us. The world is not then seeking our company. Do remember what our Saviour said, Whosoever denieth me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.” A friend expressing a desire to help him, he replied, “None can help me essentially but my dear Saviour—he can release me if it be his blessed will.”

He impressively said, “The enemy is still very busy with his insinuations, and would persuade me that all is done, and so lead to neglect—but I must watch and pray to the end, and be very earnest with the Almighty to continue his favours, and that he will support me through all.” For a time, he was much proved with poverty of spirit, added to great bodily weakness, but he desired patience to endure it—saying, “It is very trying to bear

such great lowness and sinking of body and mind. What can I do, but endeavour patiently to bear it, looking constantly to the Almighty. I am very low, but I keep mine eye upon God."

His disposition was naturally compassionate, and during his illness, he often spoke feelingly of the poor, recommending liberality towards them, saying, he had seen it to be a christian duty, and how much greater satisfaction would result from relieving their wants than from unnecessarily accumulating wealth. Soon after this he was seized with a violent fit of coughing, so that the hour of separation seemed to be at hand; in a short respite from the cough, he expressed triumphantly, "I am happy—I am happy. If I never speak more, give my dear love in Jesus Christ to all my friends." After being relieved, he remarked, "Death is awful! very awful! but I have full faith in my foundation."

On the 3rd of 9th month he expressed an earnest desire for an easy passage, making solemn supplication as follows, "O Lord God Almighty! have pity upon me. It was thou who created both soul and body." Some time after, "I believe the enemy has now almost done with me." On the 4th, he was very weak, but still and composed. He said he was going to the Father and to the Son, and looking on his friends, bade them Farewell. The last sentence which was distinctly heard, seemed as a seal to the foregoing truths—it was, "I have the satisfaction to say I have been washed in Jordan." Soon after this, he sweetly departed without a sigh or groan, in the 9th month, 1793, in the twenty-sixth year of his age.

THOMAS RUTTER, of Bristol, departed this life in a lively hope of the mercy of Christ Jesus, on the 2d of the ninth month, 1800, aged fifty-nine. In his early years he suffered the follies of youth to degenerate into vice, and at length into infidelity and a contempt of serious things and serious persons. He still continued, however, in compliance with his father's wishes, to attend religious meetings, in one of which, his attention was arrested by a preacher whose subject was the passage from 1st Peter iv. 18. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Immediately he was filled with awe, and the Spirit of Christ opening to him his undone and sinful condition, he was broken into many tears. Notwithstanding this merciful visitation, he soon endeavoured to shake off his religious impressions, but it was in vain—he sunk under the conflict, and then was tempted to despair. Sensible, however, that he had been divinely visited, and that nothing short of the arm of Omnipotence could save him from being lost, he sought it earnestly with humble supplication. He read the Holy Scriptures, often

sought retirement, and was very diligent in public worship, yet his soul was long detained in this mournful state. At length his mind was gradually enlarged, and in his private meditation he was favoured with some faint gleams of comfort. The ministry of two individuals was also useful to him, and he was induced to make them a visit, supposing that they would feel for his state, and comfort and instruct him. But he was disappointed, and had to cry, "Lord, if thou help me not, I perish, for vain is the help of man." After having endured this dispensation of refinement and preparation, when it pleased the Lord to afford him a sense of divine favour, the current of love was so strong, that he knew not how to forbear calling upon every creature to join him in the song of praise. Being permitted to enjoy an almost continual sense of the Lord's presence, he hastily concluded that the great work of regeneration was completed. But temptations again beset him, and he found the necessity of constant daily watchfulness and prayer. Religion appeared to him to be a very deep work, and he was supported in the path of patience, by the secret and consoling presence of the Almighty. It was not long after he was brought into this watchful, humble state, that he felt his mind strongly impressed to speak by way of exhortation to others. From this service, however, he was very averse, and endeavoured with contrition and tears to examine his call, and like Gideon, to try the fleece. The more closely and earnestly he examined, the more clearly the evidence was confirmed upon his mind, until after various preparatory baptisms, he resigned himself up to obey, should further requirings be manifested. This was not speedily the case. He underwent another season of apparent desertion, which he humbly received as a chastisement for his delay—at length he found an engagement to come forth with these words, "Christ's sheep hear his voice. Let us wait to hear the voice of Christ." This was about the eighteenth year of his age, and continuing faithful to the gift received, he soon became a zealous, baptizing and acceptable minister, in which service he continued to be engaged more than forty years, visiting his brethren in most parts of England, Wales, and Ireland.

His last illness, which was painful, he endured with christian fortitude, and uttered many expressions showing the constancy of his faith, and his resignation to the divine will. He greatly lamented the situation of such as defer the all-important concerns of the soul's salvation, to the time of sickness. "The pains of the body," said he, "are enough to struggle with—I have nothing to glory in, but my infirmities. I have known something of that law of grace, whereby boasting is excluded.—*No merit in me! All of grace! All of the pardon and power which is in Christ.* Oh, that I had the tongue of an archangel, to sound

forth this glorious truth; that "it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; [which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life.]" Titus, iii. 5, 6, 7. Consonantly with this, he frequently said, "I never was more deeply sensible of my own unworthiness, and that all is of mercy, mere mercy." A little before his departure, he signified his assurance of an admittance into the kingdom of eternal rest, and at his close was mercifully favoured with an easy release from the pains of mortality.

JOB THOMAS, was a native of Caermarthenshire, in Wales. His youth appears to have been tinctured with some of the vanities incident to this period of life, and he has been frequently heard to lament that he had not then been more obedient to the Lord's requiremgs. To his surviving friends, however, he was little known, except as a diligent attender of meetings for divine worship and for discipline, and as an approved minister, sound in word and doctrine, holding fast without wavering the profession of the Christian faith. His heart was enlarged by gospel love, and filled with earnest desires for the salvation of his fellow-creatures universally. He was bold in delivering plain truths; and in his native tongue, he was clear, persuasive and fluent. He several times visited the meetings of Friends in the Principality of Wales, and occasionally had public meetings with those of other societies. In the estimation of the world he would have been accounted a poor man—his habitation was a small farm-house in Caermarthenshire, retired and sequestered, but not far distant from the public road. In this humble mansion, he received and entertained his friends with gladness and hospitality. His means of support were the culture of a small farm, and the trade of a shoemaker.

About the year 1797, he was thrown from a horse, and received so great an injury of the spine, as to occasion the deprivation of voluntary motion in every limb. His head only remained subject to his will; thus he could still turn, while he was indebted to personal assistance for his removal from his bed to his chair, for any slight alteration in his position, and in short for almost every common function of the body, the free performance of which, though it is scarcely observed by the healthy and vigorous, constitutes much of the comfort of animal life. His body, though thus deprived of motion, was still sensible to pain, and much of this positive affliction was added to the negative one, of total helplessness. He was generally fastened in his chair, while his body and legs were nearly in one straight and stiff line, with his useless arms lying before him. Oftentimes he was grievously affected by acute internal pains, to which his wan and pallid countenance gave ample testimony; yet amid all this complicated suffering, his mind seems to have remained calm and unimpaired. He derived much comfort from the society of his friends, especially such as he esteemed alive to true religion; his own mind appearing to be steadfastly anchored in Christ Jesus. He kept up religious meetings in his house, and often laboured in them in doctrine, to the edification of those who were assembled with him.

In this state of bodily suffering, he continued about ten years, evincing by his resignation and patience that he was divinely supported under all. About the beginning of the 8th month 1807, his symptoms of disease increased, and on the 15th, being considerably worse, he called his wife and son to his bed-side, and with a pleasant countenance addressed them in the Welch language, nearly as follows. He inquired whether they had any thing to say to him, "for," said he, "the blessed hours are approaching; yea, and before this night, I shall have escaped in safety

where neither trials nor troubles shall come. Be content, and do not grieve after me, for I am setting off to endless joy, to praise Him who has brought me patiently through the whole of my troubles and inexpressible afflictions.—Support me, O Lord, for these few minutes, for I am nearly come beyond the boundary of time to a boundless eternity.—I am now near giving you the last farewell; but take warning, and be daily on your watch, for in the hour you do not suspect, death, namely, the king of terrors, will come to meet you, who will make no difference between one or the other. But in the strength and love of Jehovah you will not fear death, if you seek Him whilst he is to be found, and serve him with a willing mind and an obedient heart; for his paths are paths of peace, and his ways are ways of pleasantness. O, pray continually to the Lord, to draw your desires and affections from off earthly things, and to establish them upon things heavenly and everlasting.

“My hope is in the mercy of Him who has washed me in the fountain set open for the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem—not through my own merits, but through the merits of the crucified **IMMANUEL**, who died for the sins of all mankind. And you who have to remain a little after me, give the praise, the reverence, and the honour to Him, and supplicate day and night before his throne, until you have certain knowledge that you have been baptized with the baptism of the Holy Spirit; which was sealed by the blood of the everlasting covenant. Remember, it is not an outward baptism that will serve, which is but the practising of the old shadows. Know also, that it is not the profession of religion that will do, but one that is pure and undefiled before God. This will conduct you in safety to the everlasting habitations.

“Now the time of my dissolution draws nigh—for me to go to the place where I have been these two nights. The Lord himself came to meet me; and took me with him to the height of heaven, among myriads of his holy angels, where his saints were before him, and will be for ever. Behold! now I give up the spirit: and lo! my comely companions coming to hold my head above the waves of Jordan. Behold! the gates of heaven open, and the Lord himself with arms stretched out to receive me to his mercy; I hope you who are behind will follow me thither. Success to the gospel from sea to sea, and from the river to the end of the earth: also to my dear brethren, that they may persevere in their faith to the end of their days, and then their rest will be with the Lamb, where no pain or affliction will come.

“Behold! the blessed time is come, for me to depart in peace with every one, with good desires for every one, and forgiving every one. Receive my last farewell, and the Lord bless you with the blessings of mount Zion.” Having uttered these expressions, he quietly breathed his last.

Such is the peaceful and triumphant close of a life spent in obedience to the will of God. Who is there, that in contemplating such a death-bed scene, would not earnestly exclaim, “Let me die the death of the righteous!” Let us remember then, that in order to secure to ourselves this glorious privilege, it is essentially requisite that we should live a holy, harmless, self-denying life. We must take up our daily cross to all the vanities and sinful gratifications of the world, and follow our crucified Saviour in the path of regeneration. We shall then be permitted joyfully to realize, both through life and in death, the truth of his own blessed declaration, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

BRIEF HINTS
TO
P A R E N T S,
ON THE
SUBJECT
OF
Education.



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Brief Hints to Parents, &c.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

The first and most important qualification for the right education of children, is that parents should have their own minds brought into subjection to the power of Divine Grace, and daily seek its holy assistance to fit them for discharging this momentous duty.—Without this aid, the best system of regulations will be insufficient to enable them to “train up their children in the way they should go.” When parents evince by their daily conduct that they are above all things desirous to approve themselves unto God, their counsel and instructions will have additional weight with their offspring, and there is every reason to hope that the Divine blessing will be bestowed upon their humble endeavours.

Success in education depends more on prevention, than cure—more on forming habits, than laying injunctions—more on example, than precept. It is important however, that rules laid down should be strictly enforced, till obedience becomes habitual.

This interesting business is to be begun from the cradle. The first step is to teach the infantile subject, implicit obedience to parental authority; and then to rule with such moderation and sweetness, that it shall entirely trust and love the hand that guides it. In this way, the good impressions made upon the young mind, are likely to be indelible. Persevering yet gentle firmness, begun in infancy, establishes proper discipline, procures obedience, and prevents almost all punishment.

The subjection of a child's will may be effected before the understanding is sufficiently enlarged to be influenced by reasoning. Generally, the first inclination a child discovers, is gratification of will; the first business of a parent, therefore, is to subject it. An infant will reach out its hand to take something improper for it to have; if its hand is then withheld, and the countenance and expression of the parent refuse the indulgence, unmoved by its cries or struggles, it will soon learn to yield; and, by uniformly experiencing denial, equally firm, whenever its wishes ought not to be granted, submission will become familiar and easy.

But prudent parents, while they are careful to subdue self will in their child, will be equally careful to cherish in it, every appearance of benevolence and affection.

As children advance in age, and the faculties of the mind begin to expand, parents by an easy, familiar mode of conversing with them, adapting their language to age and capacity, may acquire

almost unbounded influence over them. If parents were thus careful to cultivate the young mind from the first dawn of reason, watching every opportunity of communicating instruction, at the same time seeking a Divine blessing on their humble endeavours, we may safely believe they would be rarely disappointed in having their children to grow up around them, all that they could reasonably desire them to be.

Injunctions and restraints, if softened by endearment, will generally find returns of obedience; and claims to undue liberty, will rarely be opposed to parental advice bestowed with meekness. Early to impress the tender mind with clearly defined perceptions of right and wrong, is very important much misery may be prevented by it.

FREEDOM BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

According to the wise provision of Providence, the fond endearment of parental love, produces an attachment in the breast of the child. A judicious parent will take advantage of this circumstance, to lay a foundation for that entire freedom which ought ever to exist between parents and children. If confidence has been early invited by endearing affability, and established by prudence, reserve in the child will seldom have place in maturer years.

When children are accustomed freely to unbosom themselves, and unreservedly to reveal their wishes to the parental friend, who is most interested in their welfare, what advantages must result to them, and what pleasure to the mind of an affectionate parent. When parents thus become to their children, the familiar friends, the unreserved confidants, the sympathizing partners in their joys and sorrows, hopes and disappointments; an influence over the mind is obtained which will continue when authority ceases; and will prove a safeguard through the most critical periods of life.

Young people who are treated as companions by judicious parents, are seldom addicted to degrading practices. They will even forego many indulgences to avoid displeasing, or giving them pain. And as they freely unbosom themselves to their liberal-minded parents, these may thereby discover inclinations in the child to caution against, which might save it from many entanglements.

There are few young people who would not gladly avail themselves of parental advice and experience, if not discouraged for want of freedom in the parent. Therefore, if we would have children unbosom their thoughts to us, their confidence must be invited by kindness and condescension. Not a condescension to improper indulgences, but a condescension that increases parental authority in right government.—There is no fear of losing

respect or right authority, by freedom and familiarity: It is by this that we gain their confidence, and thus learn to know, and correct their faults.

Pure affection, is so anxiously solicitous for the true happiness of the child, that, while it endeavours, by kindness and love, to prevent the necessity of any thing like forced obedience, it also guards against that kind of liberty by which it loses its authority.

RESERVEDNESS AND SEVERITY.

That respect to the superior wisdom of a parent, which is inspired by uniting gentleness with firmness, differs widely from that slavish fear produced by severe treatment. Where the dread of punishment predominates, the disposition is generally artful. That fear which is the effect of severity, prompts children, not so much to avoid faults, as to elude detection. Indeed timid children can hardly resist the temptation which terror holds out to them, of endeavouring to hide offences if possible; and though severity should extort confession, and promise of strict obedience, it is not calculated to produce sincere repentance, or to awaken virtuous thoughts; nor does it implant any principle to hinder the child from committing a similar fault in our absence. Its self-will may indeed be made sullenly to submit to superior strength, but it will remain unsubjected; and the odious spirit of revenge, by this kind of treatment, is often generated.

One among the many disadvantages attending severe measures, is, that parents generally trust too much to the effects of chastisement, and are deficient in that uniform superintendence, advice and caution, on which the forming of right habits, almost entirely depends. Children, when subjected to severity, often obtain more indulgences and take more dangerous liberties, than those who are moderately curbed, and gently instructed. The keen temper that transports the parent to blows and harsh treatment, is often accompanied by strong affections; and when anger has subsided, he is sorry for having gone so far; then too much liberty succeeds, till another fault, originating in parental indulgence or negligence, draws on the child another unprofitable punishment. This continued crossing of humours that have been indulged, can hardly fail to call forth resentment, anger, sullenness, or obstinate perverseness; unless severity has broken the spirits, and the child is sunk under discouragement. As the frequent recurrence of anger and resentment, tends to beget hatred and ill-will, the disposition to benevolence is destroyed, and malevolence is introduced in its room.

Many children possess quick feelings of honour and disgrace, and in the most promising, these feelings are often the most acute. They have a keen sensibility to shame, whereof a

good use may be made by prudent management; but if this sensibility be put to hard proof, and that frequently, it becomes blunted, and their minds grow callous: and a child that is lost to shame, is in peculiar danger of being a lost child.

Many parents of good sense, and great moral worth, fearful of failing in their duty by not governing enough, run into the opposite extreme. They maintain such reservedness, distance, and stateliness toward their children, that they hardly dare to speak in their presence. They incumber them with a multitude of regulations; they tire them with long lessons of stern monitions; they disgust and alienate them with a superabundance of sharp reproof, and treat their little levities as if they were heinous crimes. Instead of drawing them with "cords of love," they bind them fast with cords that are galling and painful.

There are other parents whose manner toward their children, varies in exact proportion to the variations of their own fickle tempers. When in a pleasant humour themselves, they indulge them in every thing; when displeased or angry, they will punish for almost nothing. This sort of government, if government it may be called, tends alike to discourage, and breed contempt.

Children that are trained up under severe discipline, however much they fear their parents, rarely love them much; and they must needs possess more than a common share of native amiableness, if, in the end, they turn out sweet tempered, humane, and of a nice sense of honour.

To show children that we are deeply afflicted, not enraged at their misconduct, tends more to awaken their feelings, to bring into action their virtuous principles, and reclaim them from evil, than the severity of the rod; which irritates the disposition, but rarely convinces the judgment.

IMPROPER INDULGENCE.

Gratification of will, is encouraged in children by frequent indulgence of their improper desires; whereby every notion of happiness becomes connected therewith; and the idea of misery, with that of disappointment. Thus, an over-regard for personal ease, and personal gratification, is implanted in the mind, and selfishness and pride too frequently become the most prominent features in the character; for, by improper indulgence, self-will is so fostered, that a capricious humour is its unavoidable consequence. The passions so act and re-act upon each other, that the frequent gratification of will engenders pride, and pride augments the desire of gratifying the will, till it becomes insatiable. Many are the tyrannical husbands and fathers, and turbulent wives and mothers, that have been formed by an education in which the will has never known subjection. For as too great indulgence in-

creases selfishness; so, certainly, does the spirit of selfishness occasion miseries in domestic life.

RULES AND INJUNCTIONS.

A few rules are necessary for the government of children, and but a few. These should be too plain to be misunderstood, too reasonable to admit of dispute, and too important to be violated or neglected. They should be engraven early upon the memories of children, and enforced, when need requires it, with steady, but mild firmness, and by and by they will grow into habits; and submission and obedience will become natural and easy.

When children are managed in this manner from infancy, by parents, whose example comports with their injunctions, and whose exercise of authority carries along with it evident marks of tender affection; they feel the yoke to be easy, and are withheld from acts of disobedience, more by filial love, than the dread of chastisement. Hence it is, that, in some houses, family government goes on with singular regularity, though so silent as to be scarcely perceived. There is no violent scolding; no boisterous threats; no fierce looks. Both the father and the mother are so mild and even in temper and good behaviour, that they seem scarcely to display any authority at all; and yet their children are orderly, submissive, and dutiful in a very uncommon degree. A single word, or a mere glance of the eye, they mind more than the children of some families do the pelting of hard blows.

Thus mildly treated, children are led to delight in the company and conversation of their parents, and to receive counsel readily from their lips: and when they arrive at an age to act for themselves, they do not feel like emancipated slaves; but are still looking back, with mixed emotions of respect and love, to the salutary discipline they had been under, and still accustoming themselves to consult their parents, and to receive their advice with deference.

AUTHORITY AND OBEDIENCE.

It is essential, for children to know how to obey, and to bear a denial. But if we are not exact and regular in requiring obedience, we shall never obtain it. This requires steadiness and self-command; and without these, there is very little hope, that the education of a child will be conducted upon right principles. Authority, to effect the desired purpose, must be unshaken, administered with affection, and free from fretfulness or ill temper; and though regular and consistent, yet never unnecessarily called into action, but always with effect. Authority thus guarded, will sel-

dom fail to procure a ready obedience, free from the thralldom of that slavish fear which is begot by sternness and severity.

A vigilant superintendence of children is necessary, but not a frequent interference with their little concerns, if it can be avoided. To preserve them from evil, not from childishness, should be our object.

Children are children, and it is our duty to sympathize with them, as such ; to impose upon them no unnecessary restraints ; to grant them suitable harmless gratifications, and, as far as possible, to promote their truest enjoyment. This is by no means incompatible with salutary discipline ; which, if it ever obtain right obedience, must be begun and maintained by sympathy and kindness.

What is vulgarly called scolding, has no part in establishing authority ; but tends greatly to weaken it. A multiplicity of rebukes and threats, accomplishes very little in obtaining influence or obedience.

PUNISHMENTS.

Corporal punishment, should be the last resort ; and never used except for an atrocious crime, or a smaller one obstinately persisted in. To render it efficacious, or rather, to prevent its becoming a dangerous evil, it should be administered with perfect serenity of temper, and affection towards the offender.

Every kind of punishment that may terrify the imagination, ought to be strictly guarded against. The dark closet is one of this kind. Severe reproaches, rough handling, and the hasty slap, lessen right authority and injure the temper of the child.

Children should not be punished for mere accidents, but mildly warned against similar carelessness in future ; and yet some people show much greater displeasure with a child for accidentally breaking a piece of china, or tearing its clothes, than for telling an untruth. Here the lesser good is preferred to the greater, and the primary object of education is lost sight of.

When a child has been punished in any way, he should be restored to favour as soon as he evinces sincere repentance ; and when he has received forgiveness, treated as if nothing had happened. He may be affectionately reminded of his fault in private, as a warning for the future ; but to upbraid him with it, especially in the presence of others, is a breach of honour, and a great unkindness. Under any circumstances, to reproach children in company, is useless, and often injurious, as well as painful to them ; and is generally done from irritability of temper, with little view to their profit. To have the name of a naughty child, may produce so disheartening an effect on the mind, that the ill consequences may be felt to its great disadvantage.

HARMONY IN FAMILIES.

Impartiality tends greatly to promote harmony in families. Hence the necessity of parents' not manifesting any partiality to one or more of their children. In the favoured child, it lays the foundation for pride and self-importance, and in the neglected one, it raises indignation, if not hatred. Whatever may be the motives assigned for partiality, parents must answer to the Judge of all the earth, for the sorrows and evils it produces.

Harmony in a family will be greatly interrupted, should the father and mother pursue different systems in the management of their children. It is therefore highly necessary that they adopt a similar plan; otherwise one or the other of them, and perhaps both, will lose the esteem of their children; and obedience to either is not to be expected. And the probability is that bad habits, and incorrect principles will be established.

In order to promote love and harmony among children, one should not be allowed to domineer over or tease another, nor ought one to be praised at the expense of another. No invidious comparisons ought to be drawn. Children should not be allowed to scoff at one who happens to be an offender. This practice destroys affection, and gives rise to resentment and retaliation. They should be taught to feel for one another when in disgrace, and not be prohibited from interceding.

TEMPER.

Great care is necessary not to injure the temper of our children; which is easily done. The government of our own temper among our children, is essential; for, if we speak to a child in a fretful manner, we generally find, that his answer partakes of the like character. Our own irritability often excites a similar disposition in the little ones around us.

Blame, is to be dispensed cautiously; for a child may be called naughty, troublesome, or unkind, so often, that his temper will be kept in continual irritation, or he will listen with perfect indifference.

In early childhood, much may be done by a system of prevention. A judicious parent may avert an impending naughty fit by change of object, gentle amusement, and care to put no temptation in the way, if any of the little ones appear to be uncomfortable or irritable.

Children should not be unnecessarily thwarted when in pursuit of an object. A child, for example, before he can speak, is trotting after a ball; the nurse snatches him up at the moment, to be washed, and the poor child throws himself into a violent passion; whereas, had she kindly assisted him in gaining his object, and then taken him up, this trial would have been spared,

and his temper been uninjured.—Teasing and derision tend very much to imbitter the best temper.

GENEROSITY AND BENEVOLENCE.

To promote these virtues, selfishness, the prevailing evil of the human heart, must be carefully watched, and perseveringly counteracted in our children, and in our own conduct on all occasions.

Generosity and benevolence, are not of a nature to be enforced by authority: but we may do much to promote their growth by our example, our influence, our instruction, and by the judicious improvement of those natural feelings of kindness, which almost all children occasionally display. There are very few, if any, who do not discover emotions of sympathy and pity, at the sight of sorrow and suffering; these are among the favourable opportunities for awakening their benevolence and compassion; not only toward their fellow creatures, but to every living thing; and we should be particularly careful to lose no such opportunity of cultivating this tenderness of feeling among themselves.

When a child has received an act of kindness or generosity, an appeal ought to be made to his feelings, and the duty of contributing in a similar manner to the happiness of others, enforced at the moment when the mind is in a proper tone for the exercise of the sympathetic feelings.

In order to promote sympathetic feelings in their children, parents should uniformly manifest an abhorrence of cruelty, under whatever form it may appear; even when exercised toward the most insignificant insect. They should also watchfully guard against, and endeavour to suppress, a revengeful disposition, not only in their children, but also in those around them. If a child frequently hears the language of retaliation and mutual reproach, can we be surprised if he displays an irascible and vindictive temper, as his will and his passions become strengthened by age?

The principle of responsibility for the right use both of time and property, should be frequently impressed on the youthful mind. Teach children that a lavish use of the gifts of our Heavenly Father, is a species of ingratitude to him, and injustice to those of our fellow-creatures who need the blessings so bountifully bestowed upon us. Teach them not to waste the least property, nor spoil the most trifling article, as both may be useful to poor people. To give the feelings of commiseration and benevolence a right direction, they should be exercised in good deeds. They may be taught to take care of, and save their clothing when past their use, to give to those poor children who have not sufficient

clothes to defend them from the cold. How powerfully would the example of parents in thus saving and giving to the poor, tend to strengthen those amiable virtues in their children !

JUSTICE.

An early and deep rooted sense of justice, strict justice, is the proper soil wherein to nourish every moral virtue ; and therefore it should be the constant care of parents, assiduously to instill its importance into the tender minds of their children. The feelings of benevolence will never be uniform nor extensive in their operations, unless they are supported by a strong sense of justice. The most scrupulous integrity, liberality, fair dealing, and honour, consistent with doing unto others on all occasions, as we would be done unto, ought to be early and forcibly inculcated, by example as well as precept. So far from our indulging a smile at any instance of selfish dexterity, they should see that we view it with disapprobation.

TRUTH AND SINCERITY.

We should labour to excite in children a detestation of all that is mean, cunning, or false ; to inspire them with a spirit of openness, honour, and candour ; making them feel how noble it is, not merely to speak the truth, but to speak the simple, unaltered truth ; whether it tell for or against themselves. But to effect this, our example must uniformly concur with our instructions. Our whole behaviour to them should be fair and without artifice. We should never deceive them, never employ cunning to gain our ends, or to spare present trouble ; as for instance, to assure a child that the medicine he is to take, is pleasant, when it is not so. Artifice is generally detected, even by children. There is much in the old proverb, "a cunning trick helps but once, and hinders ever after."

Great caution is required in making promises ; but when made, they should see that we are rigid in performing them ; our word passed must not be broken.

The meanness of talebearing and detraction should be strongly impressed upon the mind in early life : and children reminded, that, not only duty, but a sense of honour, should lead them not to speak that of an absent person, which they would not speak were he present.

If we have grounds to suppose a child guilty of misconduct, it is better to ascertain the truth by our own observation, or the evidence of others, than by a forced confession from himself. Yet sometimes it may be necessary to question him in order to find out the certainty. This must be done with great caution, not with that vehemence and hurry so commonly employed on

such occasions ; but with calmness and affection ; cautioning him against answering in haste ; reminding him of the importance and happy consequences of speaking truth ; of our willingness to forgive, if he freely confess his fault, and show himself upright and honourable in his conduct.

To establish a habitual regard to the principle of honesty, children should not be permitted to pick up the smallest article without inquiring to whom it belongs. This easy rule, and asking leave, even when very young, before they take any thing, will give them a strong regard to the property of others. To habituate children to ask permission, is equivalent to seeking advice in more advanced years.

THE INQUISITIVENESS OF CHILDREN.

One of the distinctive qualities of our nature, is the principle of curiosity. The disposition to pry out the *how* and the *why*, is sometimes seen from the very cradle ; and is always to be regarded as an auspicious token : it being in fact the germin of all future improvement ; the genuine bud of intellectual fruit. Great advantage might be taken of such a toward disposition, were it under the constant management of superior skill united with patient industry ; but in the nurture and training up of children, this important particular, is, for the most part, overlooked, and their early curiosity either damped or misdirected ; and in this way many are brought up in great ignorance, who might have been shaped to intellectual excellence.

Children come into a world, where, to them, every thing is new and strange ; a world, of which, and of all therein, they are utterly ignorant. These newly-born citizens of the world act just as persons come to years of maturity would act under like circumstances. God hath given them an appetite for knowledge, and they seek after it with ardency. *What is this? What is that made for? How is it done, and why is it so?* These, and scores of similar questions, are asked in early childhood, and to them the information they inquire after is material, though their questions may seem trifling in the eyes of those to whom the things were long since known.

Were their inquiries properly encouraged, it would lead them to think for themselves ; it would put them upon the exercise of their reason, as well as of their memory. At the same time, if there were observable in them a forward pertness, or any real impertinence, it might easily be checked without damping their curiosity.

I have seen fathers, so stately and stern, that their children scarcely dare speak to them, and much less familiarly to question them. And I have seen schoolmasters who would requite

the familiar question of a little pupil, with a frightening frown, if not with a hard blow. Thus the young mind is pinioned, and then bid to soar.

Whatever children hear read, or spoken of in terms of approbation, will be likely to give a strong bias to their minds: hence the necessity of guarding conversation in families, as well as excluding books and companions that have a tendency to vitiate the heart.

FEARFULNESS AND FORTITUDE.

Fear, if suffered to gain the ascendancy over the mind, proves a most enslaving and tormenting infirmity. To secure our children from all unnecessary and imaginary fears, they should, as far as possible, be guarded from every thing likely to excite sudden alarm, or to terrify the imagination. Stories about ghosts, apparitions, extraordinary dreams, and other gloomy and mysterious tales, should not be named in their presence.

How cruel is it *purposely* to excite in them false terrors; as by threatening them with "mad dog," or "black man who comes for naughty children," &c: or, in order to hinder them from touching what they ought not, to tell them "it will bite." By such means, they may acquire imaginary terrors, that will accompany them through life. It is a well-known fact, that there are many sensible persons, who are slaves through life to the terrors of darkness, in consequence of their having been frightened when children, by the foolish stories of ghosts and apparitions having been seen in the dark. Here ghosts and darkness are associated together in childhood, and impressed by the passion of fear, and though reason in riper age, has pointed out the absurdity, it has not always been able to extirpate the fear.

By guarding children from useless fears, one step is gained towards the cultivation of fortitude: yet another and important one is, to infuse into the system of education a certain portion of resolution and hardihood; to train up those entrusted to us as inhabitants of a world, in which they are to meet with pain, sickness, dangers and sorrows; and where consequently self-denial and fortitude are essential. While we wish to avoid every appearance of unkindness and want of feeling, let us not err, by adopting too tender and enervating a system. Let us distinguish, and maintain the distinction, between the wants of nature, and those of imagination; bring up our children as little dependent as possible upon bodily indulgence and luxuries; accustom them to the plainest food, to beds not too soft, airy rooms, and, as far as their constitutions will allow, to hardy habits.

For children to have every thing done for them, tends to enervate the mind, and render them helpless beings, unable to con-

trive for themselves. The "I can't," with which children are apt to comply to commands given them, is rarely to be admitted.

PRIDE AND VANITY.

There are few defects which appear earlier in children than pride and vanity. They delight in being noticed, praised, and admired. It is therefore of no small consequence, amidst all our affectionate attentions to them, that we guard against nurturing their self-love, self-importance, and fondness for admiration. We may show them every kindness, we may amuse and make them happy, without flattering their vanity. But here many people are apt to mistake; instead of encouragement judiciously administered, as a just reward of merit, and a stimulus to what is good, they too often speak in commendation of the fine persons, carriage or dress of their children, and repeat and applaud their smart sayings to others in their presence, which can scarcely fail to produce ill consequences.

It is more than probable, that parents frequently cultivate the seeds of pride and vanity in their children by the finery of dress they put on them? Hence they become captives to the frivolousness of fashion; and then, present dress, however good, must, if not modish, be thrown off, and one having the charm of novelty take its place.—Christian simplicity certainly demands a reform in this particular.

INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY.

Idleness is an inlet to most other vices; while by industry the powers of the mind are turned to good account. Usefulness of character depends much on diligence. Early to accustom children to industry, application, and perseverance, is a necessary part of education. If indulged in idleness when young, application to business will afterwards be irksome. They should early be made sensible of the value of time; they should be made to understand that no economy is so essential as the economy of time; and that, as by squandering pence, we are very soon deprived of pounds; so by wasting minutes, we shall lose not only hours, but days and months.* We must endeavour to inspire children with the spirit inculcated in the following precept: "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

For a young woman to have been properly instructed in the management of a family, is far more essential to her than all the elegant arts, on which so much time and expense are by some bestowed. If she has been made acquainted with every particular circumstance of a servant's duty, and takes an active part in family concerns, combines frugality with plenty, retrenches superfluous cost and decoration, and thus is fitted to meet adverse

as well as prosperous circumstances, she will be useful and respectable in her father's family, and particularly so in a married state. When domestic economy is viewed in this light, is there a woman that would disdain to rank it among her accomplishments, or a sensible man who would not prize it in his wife?

Whatever may be our occupation in life, there is in an industrious, upright, liberal and benevolent mind, an inherent dignity, that will meet with esteem from all whose opinion deserves to be regarded.

As frugality and industry are by no means necessarily connected with an avaricious disposition, the most opulent parent ought not to be ashamed to adopt, in the economical education of his children, the excellent motto, "waste not, want not." Early habits of care, and an early aversion and contempt of waste, are an interesting lesson for children to learn. The most industrious and frugal are frequently the most liberal and benevolent. And it is upon this principle, that children should not only be taught, to save, but also that they are responsible for making a right use of what they save, or possess.

Whilst encouraging children in industrious habits, let us not forget or neglect to encourage industry at their books, and to afford them opportunities for mental improvement, to qualify them rightly to enjoy the necessary intercourse with mankind.

MANNERS.

Good manners add lustre to virtue. They teach us to oblige, and pay proper attention to others. In order therefore to inspire children with such a disposition, we should endeavour early to infuse the spirit of that precept—"Honour all men;" and teach them, that kindness and civility are due to all: that a haughty, positive, or contemptuous manner, is not only ill bred, but unchristian; and especially to be avoided in our behaviour to servants, or those in inferior stations in life. To these they should never be suffered to behave with haughtiness, nor even to speak with a commanding tone of voice: as it will have a direct tendency to cherish pride and self-importance.

It is also necessary to guard children against vulgar habits, as loud talking and laughing.—Whispering in company does not comport with good manners; and mimicry is the favourite amusement of low minds. Speaking, when it interrupts reading or conversation, and the habit of contradicting others, are improper, and should be checked.

At meals, children of suitable age should be admitted to table with the family, when convenient.—This privilege will improve their manners, and tend to prevent bashfulness and awkwardness.

METHOD AND ORDER.

Method is the hinge of business ; and it requires order and punctuality. These we must teach our children principally by example. Let them see, that we rise early, have regular hours as much as may be, for the employments of the day ; that we are careful to do one thing at a time, and every thing in its right time ; that we stick to the business we have in hand as far as unexpected incidents allow ; that we never put off till to-morrow what may be done to-day ; that we adopt the maxim, "a place for every thing, and every thing in its place." Let them be taught also, that what is worth doing, is worth doing well.

It is for want of method and order, that some people who have much to do, get but little done. They are frequently in a hurry, have many things begun, but none finished.

RELIGION.

It is of great consequence, that the first impressions made on the minds of children respecting the Divine Being, be correct and encouraging.—They should be taught that He is the Giver of every good, the Author of all felicity, that He is love itself, and delights in our happiness

The principle of accountability for all our actions is the basis of religious instruction, and ought to be early and forcibly impressed upon the minds of children—They should understand, that not for actions only, but for words and thoughts also, we shall be called to give an account—That wherever they are, or whatever they are doing, they are continually in the sight of the Great Searcher of hearts, and that how much soever they may conceal their faults from men, he sees and knows all they do—that he loves and approves them when they do well, but is displeased with and condemns their evil words or actions.—We should endeavour early to make them acquainted with the operations of divine grace in their own minds, teach them that it is this which comforts and approves them for their good behaviour, but makes them uneasy and distressed when they have conducted amiss, and that to yield implicit obedience to its gentle intimations, is the only sure path to peace and blessedness. Impressions like these, and having religion and happiness connected together in their view, will be likely to beget feelings of love, reverence, and gratitude. And as age unfolds the capacity, the doctrine of christianity ought to be presented in the simplest forms. No religious instruction is better suited to the minds of children, than that derived from the precepts and example of Christ ; and no part of his example more calculated to touch their hearts, than the compassion and the tenderness, which he so perfectly displayed.

It is a very interesting part of religious education, to fix on the young mind a conviction that religion is not an occasional act, but the effect of the indwelling principle of divine grace, by which their common conduct is to be governed, and their evil propensities subdued ; that the indissoluble connection between religion and moral rectitude must ever be maintained, *if ye love God, ye will avoid evil, and do good.*—And that as it is the purity of the motive which not only gives worth and beauty, but which, in a christian sense, gives life and efficacy to the best actions, so without pure motives, acts of devotion, however splendid, will not be accepted in the divine sight.

In closing these hints, permit me to say, that, whatever may be the event of a pious education to the child, it is very important to parents to have acquitted themselves of the incumbent duty of training their child in the way he should go. Those, who, though mourning over a prodigal child, can appeal to the Searcher of hearts, for having endeavoured, to the best of their knowledge, to lead him in the path of rectitude, must have feelings and reflections widely different from those of parents who, though also lamenting the evil course of their offspring, feel their own neglected duty of seasonable care and instruction, greatly increasing the bitterness of their sorrows.

FINIS.



ON PROFANE SWEARING.

"It chills my blood, to hear the bless'd Supreme
Rudely appeal'd to, on each trifling theme :
Maintain your rank—vulgarity despise—
To swear is neither brave, polite, nor wise.
You would not swear upon a bed of death—
Reflect! your Maker now could stop your breath."

IF we give the subject of Profane Swearing a few moments' serious consideration,—its folly and sinfulness will be strikingly manifest. Under this head, we include all oaths, and curses ; —all light and frivolous invocations of the sacred name, which are so often uttered through habit, or employed to give vent to the ebullitions of passion. In the first place, let us consider the disrespect and disobedience which it manifests to God our Creator. Profaneness is a crime which entirely destroys that sacred reverence and fear of the Supreme Being which is due from all his rational creatures—feelings which, if rightly cherished, would induce us to view with horror a light and irreverent invocation of the name of Him, who hath made the heavens and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth ;—at whose look the earth trembles, and the foundations of the everlasting hills are moved—before whom, the angels of heaven are represented as veiling themselves in deep humility, while crying, Holy ! holy ! holy ! is the Lord of hosts ! Is it for worms of the dust, wantonly to insult that Almighty Being, who made them by his power, and who can consume them by the breath of his mouth ; but who still spares them in the midst of their crimes, and affords them the opportunity and means of repentance ? Is it for them to disobey his positive commands ? He has said, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain : swear not at all, neither by

heaven, for it is God's throne, neither by the earth, for it is his footstool.' These commands are daily violated by thousands, apparently without excuse, in the mere wantonness of impiety.

When the fear of God becomes obliterated from the heart, which is the necessary consequence of profanity, the only true safe-guard to virtue and piety is removed; and the way is open and direct into every other iniquity. There can be no moral barrier strong enough to restrain him, who has lost all fear and reverence for his Creator.

But men do not become openly profane at once;—they begin, perhaps, with using sudden exclamations, and certain equivocal expressions, that may not generally be considered oaths, although they most assuredly are; such as calling upon the names of saints and heathen deities. Step by step they are gradually led on, until becoming familiar with this kind of language, and habitually using it in discourse, they substitute the name of the only true God, and eventually become open, shameless blasphemers of his sacred name,—employing it on the most trifling occasion, often to imprecate vengeance upon their fellow-men, to vent their evil passions, or to assist buffoonery and licentiousness in their worst exhibitions. Thus, the name of that Holy Being, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who has declared he will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain, is used to season impure discourse, and in connection with language which exhibits the darkest passions of our nature.

The habit of Profane Swearing necessarily destroys the respectability of those who indulge in it; for, as they assimilate in their language to the most degraded and wretched in society, we naturally ascribe to them the same grossness of mind, and the same defect of virtuous sentiment, which are characteristic of that class. Besides offending against the propriety and purity of social intercourse, they who indulge in it wantonly destroy their reputation for veracity;—for little confidence can be placed in that man's assertion, who constantly invokes the Almighty to witness a falsehood, or take notice of a threat never intended to be executed,—or a promise that will never be fulfilled. A fact when simply asserted is generally more likely to be believed, than when attested by an oath, or imprecation; for decent and proper language naturally inspires respect, while profaneness weakens and destroys it. Simple indeed must he be, who hopes to strengthen his credibility by oaths and cursing. If good character does

not give weight to assertions, they can derive none from impiety. He that has not within him principles which will preserve him from insulting the Most High, by profanity and blasphemy, can have no love of truth and virtue strong enough to prevent his pursuing any object to which his evil passions may impel him.

It is to be feared that there are some, who are silly and wicked enough to imagine, that the use of profane language ornaments their conversation, and is indicative of wit. Hence all their discourse is seasoned with it, and it is made to help out miserable jests, among those, who do not seem to understand the great difference between profanity and wit. This is, indeed, a very serious mistake,—for so far from adding ornament to discourse, it gives it a vulgar and disgusting tone,—so far from being indicative of talent and intelligence, it is the very frequent attendant of weakness of mind and ignorance. It is equally opposed to religion and good taste. But what must be thought of the feelings and gratitude of that man, who employs whatever abilities he may possess, in offering insult and blasphemy to that gracious Being who bestowed them? It is awful indeed to reflect,—that such an one may be suddenly called to appear before his Creator and Judge, with a half-uttered oath upon his tongue.

There are others, it is believed, who accustom themselves to the use of profane language, in order to impress their companions with an exalted idea of their courage and daring. They imagine that it indicates a bold, free spirit, which has cast off all restraint, and act as though it were honourable to set at defiance moral and religious obligations;—and appear to desire, by blaspheming the name of the Most High, to make the world believe that they are not even afraid of Him. But this we may rest assured is but the effect of the most cowardly and degrading fear. They are afraid of the taunts of their companions, and employ curses to repel them. They are afraid of calm reflection, and use imprecations to drown it. They are afraid for their own courage, and use profane excitement to support it. But does it answer these purposes? Certainly not. The stings of conscience will be felt, and they are made to fear and tremble amid all their blasphemies. True courage, which is a calm and dignified feeling, is far different from this, and is only experienced by those who cherish a reverent fear of God.

But if the blasphemers had all the courage that man ever possessed, what would it avail them in a day that is fast ap-

proaching, when we shall all appear before the Judge of quick and dead!—Let him remember, that sooner or later, he must meet this Judge, who will vindicate the majesty of his holy name.—Oh! where will be his boasted courage in the presence of Him,—before whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, either in judgment or mercy? Let the blasphemer then turn from his wickedness and bring forth fruit meet for repentance, before he goes hence to be seen of men no more. If he does not, he will most assuredly have to reap the fruit of his doings through all eternity, and experience the awful condition of those, to whom it will be said, “Depart from me ye cursed;”—to which will be added the mournful reflection, that it is the doom he has called down upon himself.

In conclusion, it may safely be asserted, that the practice of profane swearing is one of unmingled evil. It is an insult offered by a finite and fallible creature, to the infinite and Holy Being who created him. It destroys all respect for sacred things,—lowers the standard of morality,—brutalizes the character and conduct,—injures the reputation,—and is, in short, opposed to all the best interests of society. It is a crime equally without reason, and without excuse. It neither raises a man’s character for veracity, intellect, taste, or courage. In every light in which it can be viewed, it appears a melancholy dereliction from religion, virtue, and decency,—equally unprofitable, shameful, and wicked.

The only sure preservative from this awful crime, is to cherish in the heart feelings of reverence and love for our Creator,—avoiding the frequent, and especially the light and thoughtless use of his name, which never should be uttered but with solemn feelings and with purified lips;—shun every form of expression the tendency of which is even doubtful. “Remember that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

THE END.



A FRIENDLY ADDRESS TO SAILORS.

THE Psalmist tells us, that they who go down to the sea in ships, who do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. Ps. cvii. 23.

You who in the course of your honest and useful occupation are often exposed to much hardship and danger have great opportunity to observe the mighty power and goodness of your heavenly Preserver, who has led you safely through so many perils: and who only can rule the raging of the sea. We wish that you may be impressed with an awakening sense of the power and majesty of the great Almighty Creator, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and the fountains of water. And we beseech you to consider the duties you owe to Him who is the Author of your being, and the giver of every blessing you enjoy; and to be aroused to a feeling of the awful uncertainty and danger of the state in which you are placed.

Life may be compared to an ocean on which we are all embarked. It also is full of changes. Sometimes we have a fair wind and bright sunshine, and all goes on prosperously: at another time every thing around us looks so dark, gloomy, and discouraging, that we know not which way to steer our course. Now let us look at the ships, which are every where scattered over the deep. When they are launched upon the mighty ocean, are they left to drive hither and thither as the winds and waves may carry them? Certainly not. They do not venture on so unstable an element, without every necessary precaution and provision for their safety. They not only carry sail to help them forward but also take on board a quantity of ballast to keep them steady; and anchors to hold them fast in time of danger. Neither does the skilful mariner omit carefully to consult the chart on which are marked all the rocks and shoals that threaten him with destruction. But above all, he keeps an eye on the compass, which enables the

helmsman to steer his course, in the trackless and unknown seas, and to guide the vessel safely into port; where out of the reach of storm and tempest, she rides in security. Are you equally careful to provide for the safety and well-being of your immortal souls in your passage over the sea of time, and for a happy entrance into that haven of rest, which awaits the righteous at the end of their voyage? Or are you suffering yourselves to drift carelessly along, with every current, heedless of the open rocks, or hidden shoals that lie in your way, and threaten you with dreadful shipwreck from which there may be no possibility of escape? Consider for a moment, what an indescribably awful thing it is to be lost eternally, to receive that tremendous sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Mat. xxv. 41. You have to struggle against many sinful and corrupt propensities, which, like a tide running rapidly, continually draw you from a direct course. Innumerable evils, like so many frightful rocks, surround you on every hand. Some of them you know to be exceedingly dangerous. They are lighted as by a beacon; and you have seen your companions wrecked upon them. Others there are more hidden, yet equally perilous. It is then of the highest importance that you do not proceed further to sea, without enquiring how far you have made suitable provision for a voyage of so much difficulty. Have you set as your sail, that hope which is full of immortality? Have you placed the fear of God before your eyes, to steady you against the shifting winds to which you may be liable? Have you laid hold on that Faith which as an anchor, would keep you in the stormiest hour, in a state of firm and quiet dependence on the mercy and goodness of God? Do you consult the Bible as a chart furnished with instructions for your safe passage? Do you, above all, seek constantly for the guidance of the Holy Spirit which as a compass, would direct you where to steer; and which the Lord hath promised to give to all that ask in sincerity? Luke xi. 13. This holy influence if you were concerned, by earnest and frequent prayer, diligently to seek it, would not only conduct you through all the difficulties of time, but would finally bring you, through the riches of redeeming mercy to a blessed and glorious eternity: where is no more pain, sickness nor disappointment, where storms and tempests are unknown, and where all is tranquillity and peace. Most persons are in some degree sensible of the dreadful consequences of sin and of the advantages of a life of religion, and at times feel a desire that at the last their souls may be happy. But alas! we are so unwilling to take the means which lead to this blessed end! We are too apt to put off to a future time that work of repentance which must be wrought before we can come to know the glorious and unspeakable privileges of true believers; and to think that some

time or other, but not now, we will give our attention to these things ; forgetting that our frail life passeth away like a shadow, and, when we least expect it, may be suddenly at an end. How dreadful then it is to trifle with the eternal interests of our never-dying souls ! It is God who giveth us life, and he can take it away at his pleasure, and call us, in a moment, to give an account before his judgment seat, where the Scriptures assure us, we shall receive the reward of the deeds done in the body, 2 Cor. v. 10. when they that have done evil shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation. John v. 29. May you then seriously consider this awful gift, the gift of life ; and be induced earnestly to implore that Divine assistance, which would enable you to use it in the fear of God, and with a comfortable hope of his favour here and hereafter ; through the mercy of the adorable Redeemer, who laid down his life for the world ; whose blessed office it is to finish transgression, to make an end of sins, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Dan. ix. 24. His merciful regard is extended to the chief of sinners. Hear his own gracious declaration, "I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance," Matt. ix. 13 ; and again "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." Luke xv. 10.

Oh ! then come to this gracious Saviour, this Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. John i. 29. He came down from his throne of glory ; when he was infinitely above this earth and its frail inhabitants ; took upon him our nature ; passed through a life of poverty and sorrow ; and at length submitted to the cruel death of the cross, for our redemption : and he is now ascended on high where he sitteth on the right hand of God, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. In his holy and sinless life, he has left us an example that we should follow his steps, and he has given us his Holy Spirit for our aid, that we may by our circumspect conduct and conversation, adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour ; and serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. How great is his love, how unutterable his mercy to poor lost man ! He did not reject the prayer of the repenting publican ; "God be merciful to me a sinner," and he will still hear those, who under a deep sense of their own utter helplessness and unworthiness, and of his infinite compassion, cast themselves upon his free mercy, and seek to be delivered from the power of sin, by his cleansing, sanctifying grace. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" was his own gracious declaration. John vi. 37.

Blessed be his holy name, his power is the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever, and though he no longer dwells upon this earth, He is still seeking by the operation of his good Spirit, to heal all our spiritual diseases ; is still able to give sight to the blind, to make the deaf hear, the lame walk, and to raise those who are

dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1. "I am" thus he declared of himself, "the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John xi. 25. 26.

Of ourselves we can do nothing; and whilst we rely on our own strength, we can make no advances in the way of holiness. A cruel and unwearied enemy without, and a deceitful heart within, will be continually betraying us into evil; but "Help is laid upon one that is mighty." "Upon one that is able to save to the uttermost, them that come unto God by Him." Heb. vii. 25.

He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Isa. xl. 29. Hear his gracious invitation: "come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. xi. 28. 29. If we were concerned to wait continually upon this heavenly Teacher in the secret of our souls, he would lead us into all truth; he would teach us all things and bring all things to our remembrance. John xiv. 26. He would keep us in the hour of temptation; strengthen us in the day of trial and affliction; enable us in humble faith to cast all our care upon the Lord; and when the difficulties and sorrows of life are at an end, would give us in unmerited mercy, an admittance into that kingdom, where the Scripture expressly assures us, nothing that worketh an abomination, or maketh a lie, can enter, Rev. xxi. 8. vii. 14. but those only whose garments are washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb; and whom he hath redeemed out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

THE END.



POPULAR AMUSEMENTS.

(From the Writings of Jonathan Dymond.)

It is a remarkable circumstance, that in almost all Christian countries, many of the popular amusements have been regarded as objectionable by the more sober and conscientious part of the community. This opinion could scarcely have been general unless it had been just: yet *why* should a people prefer amusements of which good men feel themselves compelled to disapprove? It may be feared that the desires which are seeking for gratification are not themselves pure; and pure pleasures are not congenial to impure minds.

Amusement is confessedly a subordinate concern in life.—It is neither the principal, nor among the principal objects of proper solicitude. No reasonable man sacrifices the more important thing to the less; and that a man's religious and moral condition is of incomparably greater importance than his diversion, is sufficiently plain. In estimating the propriety, or rather the lawfulness, of a given amusement, it may safely be laid down, that none is lawful of which the aggregate consequences are injurious to morals;—nor, if its effects upon the immediate agents are, in general, morally bad;—nor, if it occasions needless pain and misery to men or to animals;—nor, lastly, if it occupies much time, or is attended with much expense.

If a person, by way of showing the propriety of theatrical exhibitions, should ask whether there was any harm in a man's repeating a composition before others, and accompanying it with appropriate gestures, he would ask a very foolish question; because he would ask a question that possesses little or no relevancy to the subject.

What are the ordinary effects of the stage upon those who act on it? One, and one only answer can be given,—that whatever happy exceptions there may be, the effect is bad;—that the moral and religious character of actors is lower than

that of persons of other professions. "It is an undeniable fact—for the truth of which we may safely appeal to every age and nation—that the situation of the performers, particularly of those of the female sex, is remarkably unfavourable to the maintenance and growth of the religious and moral principle; and of course highly dangerous to their eternal interests."^{*}

Therefore, if I take my seat in the theatre, I have paid my money as an inducement to a number of persons to subject their principles to extreme danger: and the defence which I make is, that I am amused by it. This is a defence that reason pronounces to be absurd, and morality to be vicious. Yet I have no other to make;—it is the sum total of my justification.

But this, which is sufficient to decide the morality of the question, is not the only, nor the chief part of the evil. The evil which is suffered by the performers may be more intense, but upon the spectators and others, it is more extended. The night of a play is the harvest-time of iniquity; where the profligate and the sensual put in their sickles and reap. It is to no purpose to say that a man may go to the theatre, or parade a saloon, without taking part in the surrounding licentiousness. All who are there promote the licentiousness;—that is to say, if none purchased tickets, there would be neither actors to be depraved, nor dramas to vitiate, nor saloons to degrade, and corrupt, and shock us. The whole question of the lawfulness of dramatic amusements, is resolved into a very simple thing:—after the doors, on any given night, are closed, have the *virtuous* or *vicious* dispositions of the attenders been, in the greater degree, promoted. Every one knows that the balance is on the side of vice: and this conclusively decides the question,—“Is it lawful to attend?”

The same question is to be asked, and the same answer will be returned, respecting various other assemblies for purposes of amusement. They do more harm than good. They may please, but they injure us; and what makes the case still stronger is, that the pleasure is frequently such as ought not to be enjoyed. A tippler enjoys pleasure in becoming drunk; but he is not to allege the gratification as a set-off against the immorality. And so it is with no small part of the pleasures of an assembly. Dispositions are gratified which it would be wiser to thwart; and, to speak the truth, if the dispositions of the mind were such as they ought to be,

many of these modes of diversion would be neither relished nor resorted to. Some persons try to persuade themselves that charity forms a part of their motive in attending such places,—as when the profits of the night are given to a benevolent institution. They hope, that though it would not be quite right to go if benevolence was not a gainer, yet that the end warrants the means : but if those persons are charitable, let them give their money without deducting half for purposes of questionable propriety. Religious amusements, such as oratories, and the like, form one of those artifices of chicanery by which people cheat, or try to cheat themselves. The music, say they, is sacred, is devotional ; it excites and animates our religious sensibilities. As it respects Christianity, this is all imposition and fiction : and it is unfortunate, that some of the most solemn topics of our religion are brought into such unworthy and debasing alliance.

Masquerades are of a more decided character. If the pleasure which people derive from meeting in disguises consisted merely in the “ fun and drollery ” of the thing, we might wonder to see so many children of five and six feet high, and leave them, perhaps, to their childishness ; but the truth is, that to many, the zest of the concealment consists in the opportunity it gives of covert licentiousness ;—of doing that in secret of which, openly, they would profess to be ashamed. Some men and some women, who affect propriety when the face is shown, are glad of a few hours of concealed libertinism. It is a time in which the principles are left to guard the citadel of virtue, without the auxiliary of public opinion. And ill do they guard it. It is no equivocal indication of the slender power of a person’s principles, when they do not restrain him any longer than his misdeeds will produce exposure. She who is immodest at a masquerade, is modest no where. She may affect the language of delicacy, and maintain external decorum ; but she has no purity of mind.

The *turf* is a strong-hold of gambling ; and therefore, an efficient cause of misery and wickedness. It is an amusement of almost unmingled evil : but upon whom is the evil chargeable ? Upon the fifty or one hundred persons only who bring horses or make bets ? No. Every man participates who attends the course. Every one, therefore, who is present, must take his share of the mischief and the responsibility.

If we calculate the benefit and mischiefs of *field sports*, the balance will be found to be greatly against them. The advantages are—that a man is amused, and, possibly that his health is improved : some of the disadvantages are—that they are unpropitious to the influence of religion, and the dispositions tha

religion induces ;—that they expend money and time which a man ought to be able to employ better ;—and that they inflict gratuitous misery upon the inferior animals.

That field sports have any tendency to make a man better, no one will pretend : and no one who looks around him, will doubt that the tendency is in the opposite direction. Is the character of the *sportsman* distinguished by religious sensibility ? No. By activity of benevolence ? No. By intellectual exertion ? No. Sportsmen are not the persons who diffuse the light of Christianity, or endeavour to rectify the public morals, or to extend the empire of knowledge. So, then, the religious and moral tendency of field sports is bad.

As to the expenditure of time and money, it will be said, that a man has a right to employ both as he chooses : but he has no such right. Obligations apply just as truly to the mode of applying leisure and property, as to the use which a man may make of a pound of arsenic. The obligations are not, indeed, alike enforced in a court of justice ;—the misuser of arsenic is sent to prison,—the misuser of time and money awaits as sure an inquiry at another tribunal. But no folly is more absurd than that of supposing we have a right to do whatever the law does not punish. Such is the state of mankind, so great is the amount of misery and degradation, and so great are the effects of money and active philanthropy in ameliorating the condition of our species, that it is no light thing for a man to employ his time and property upon vain and needless gratifications.

These remarks might be extended to many other species of amusements, and the conclusion be the same,—that the evil outbalances the good, and that there are no grounds upon which a good man can justify a participation in them. In thus concluding, it is possible the reader may imagine that we would exclude enjoyment from the world. He who thinks this is unacquainted with the nature and sources of our better enjoyments. It is an ordinary mistake to imagine pleasure is great only when it is vivid and intemperate. It is happily and kindly provided, that the greatest sum of enjoyment is that which is quietly and constantly induced. It is unquestionably true, that no community enjoys life more than that which excludes all these amusements from its sources of enjoyment. We use, therefore, the language, not of speculation, but of experience, when we say, that none of them is, in any degree, necessary to the happiness of life.

THE END.

AN
ADDRESS
TO THOSE WHO HAVE THE CARE
OF
CHILDREN.



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AN ADDRESS, &c.

THOSE who teach others, must first learn to subdue their own passions.—Education is the correcting of fallen nature; and he who hath not, by God's grace, subdued his own, is not yet fit to correct others.

The principal part of education is, to instil into tender minds the love of God and virtue; and as we learn best from those we love most, the first step to be taken in education is, to make ourselves loved. Let all instruction then be given cheerfully, kindly, tenderly, mildly, lest by our defects we prejudice those we should instruct against what we teach them; show children in a lively and good-humoured manner that you advise them for their own sakes, and not to satisfy your humour, which will never mend theirs; that you correct them with regret, and encourage them with pleasure. Do not suppose that they are always inattentive through design; some have slow parts, and most are giddy. Children are generally clear-sighted enough to discern whether you or they are in fault; would you mend theirs, you must be patient; and perhaps discernment and tenderness are as much wanted in teachers, as docility and attention in scholars. All things are easy to those who know them; nothing so to those who do not. We were once scholars, and perhaps as dull and perverse as those we teach; but suppose you should suddenly gain your point by severity, and lose their hearts; in that case is not every thing lost? Will they not, like bent bows, return with greater violence to their former inclinations, when the restraint of a few months or years is over? But when the head is convinced, and the heart gained, the work in most cases is done forever.

If children come to you from harsh parents, and you are gentle and good-natured to them, they will love you, and all you teach for your sake. If from tender parents, and you are harsh, they will hate you, and every thing you teach them. The more defects you show, the fewer can you correct: to be masters of others, we must be so of ourselves. Let them experience, that a meek and quiet spirit is of great price; teach them all virtues by example: your wisdom must be from above, first pure, then gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good works, without partiality, without hypocrisy.

Inculcate, that to be honourable, they must be useful : that no employment is mean that is of use : set before them our Lord's example, who washed his Apostles' feet, and commanded us to do the same to each other.

Teach them that it is more honourable as well as more blessed, to give than to receive ; and that in order to this we must be frugal, even in the highest stations and fortunes. Ease, affluence, generosity, justice, and charity, are the lovely offspring of this humble virtue ; as want, anxiety, injustice, avarice, and hardness of heart, are the necessary consequences of careless prodigality. The mind of a prodigal resembles his mansion, where the vain glitter concludes in an habitation for beggars and owls ; but the person who with order and skill conducts his affairs, like the sun, blesses all within his influence, and himself is not impoverished thereby. Never show a fondness for beauty, finery, fortune, titles, or any vanity before them : teach them to be discreet : show an abhorrence to the least instance of insincerity. Children will be insincere, if not permitted to speak their minds freely. Let lies, malice, anger, envy, falsehood, and ill-nature, never escape punishment, which never should be inflicted by passionate expressions or blows, and seldom by whippings, as these may be construed to proceed from passion : for the former, they will blame you ; for the latter, themselves. Children should be dealt with, as we would be dealt by. We wish that our lives may be made agreeable, that our inclinations may be consulted, as far as it is consistent with our interest : deal thus by them. Trifles please or displease them ; but it is no trifling matter whether you gain or lose their hearts.

Give children a taste for reading ; and then, by laying good books in their way, they educate themselves. Let their works and studies be for use, not for parade. Fear not to lose respect by familiarity : respect follows esteem and love, and not constraint. You can only cure their faults by knowing them ; you can only know them by familiarity with them. Encourage them to confide in you. Be not startled at their faults, or they will not show them to you. We only open our hearts to those we love, and none but such can mend them. Permit the children entrusted to your care, to be as little as possible out of your sight or hearing, as they will hurt each other if they are : for children left to themselves, even in play, will catch each other's faults. All that has been recommended, is consistent with the most steady and regular conduct ; for steady and regular you must be, or you do nothing. Make the children do as much as possible for themselves. Encour

age them to keep their persons perfectly neat : use them to assist each other : be not severe for trifles : subdue in them by God's grace every instance of pride and vanity : let the proud child submit to the lowest employment in all things : teach them to speak low and slow : discourage pertness, which often is a fault in public education : fashion them to a graceful gesture, carriage and gait ; and make them polite : the foundation of good breeding is charity and humility ; not to offend or assume, and a desire to please, is good breeding.

With these, an easy, natural, modest behaviour is more agreeable, than what is called a pretty manner, for nothing affected can please. Forget the teacher, and be their companion : at the school hours, your instructions will enough remind them that you are their master, and that is sufficient. Tire them not with reading : make them sometimes leave off when they have an inclination to proceed. Reflect how great will be your reward for the exact discharge of your duties. As you educate these children, they will likely educate theirs, and so on until time shall be no more : and if you thus turn many to righteousness, you will shine as the stars forever, for so doing ; and when the great Shepherd shall appear, you, with other shepherds, will receive a bright crown, which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for your labour of love : therefore serve as to the Lord, and not to men ; think not of your pensions and perquisites, so much, as that the most important, the most honourable of all employments, is committed to your care, the forming the minds of the next generation. Avoid (as far as in you lies) all the faults of this, by endeavouring that those under your care may become blessings to the world, in every station of life, and bright angels to all eternity.

THE END.

CHRISTIANITY

AND

INFIDELITY

CONTRASTED.



PHILADELPHIA :

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No. 22.

Christianity and Infidelity

CONTRASTED.

NOT many years ago several young men in a certain part of this country, who had for some time been associated together in literary pursuits, mutually agreed to give their serious attention to religious topics, and freely communicate their sentiments to each other. After proceeding a while in conformity with this agreement, one of them at last avowed infidel principles; declaring his disbelief, not only of the bible, but even of the existence of God. His virtuous companions, though astonished and exceedingly shocked by this declaration, assiduously endeavoured to convince and reclaim him; but he treated their kind endeavours with scorn, upbraided them with superstitious weaknesses, and manifested a furious zeal in favour of infidelity. Thus finding him irreclaimable, they withdrew from his society, and, still persisting in their serious inquiries, grew more and more confirmed in the all-important truths of religion, according to which they carefully regulated their lives. On the other hand, the unhappy youth, who had left their company, made them the subject of his daily derision, and profane scoffs; and acting according to the tendency of his infidel principles he eagerly plunged into the vortex of dissipation and vice, and seemingly gloried in being unmeasurably wicked: but his career was short. Suddenly visited with a sickness, which, in its very commencement, appeared evidently to be the harbinger of death, his mind was at the same time seized with indescribable horror. Positively declaring he should die, and inevitably sink to the regions of wo, he utterly refused both medicine and consolation; but at the same time, earnestly requested to see his former companions: when they had arrived, they kindly attempted to sooth his distress; but he instantly forbade any efforts of the kind, and then addressed them in the following manner:—"You behold me, said he, an awful monument of heaven's justice! I lately told you that there was no God. I now know that there is a God.—I feel the weight of his displeasure, which is a thousand times more intolerable than my pain of body. I lately told you that there was no state of punishment for the wicked.—I now awfully experience the contrary.—I feel hell in my own breast, and know that I am now sinking into that abyss of wo and

destruction!" Almost immediately after uttering these sentiments, he expired; and the unutterable horrors of his departing spirit, marked his lifeless corpse with such a peculiar and frightful ghastliness, as made the beholders tremble.—*Extracted from a Washington and Georgetown Newspaper, dated October 28th, 1801.*

Emerson was an infidel, and one of the first mathematicians of the age. Though, in some respects, he might be considered a worthy man, his conduct through life, was rude, vulgar, and frequently immoral. He paid no attention to religious duties, and both intoxication and profane language were familiar to him. Towards the close of his days, being afflicted with the stone, he would crawl about the floor on his hands and knees, sometimes praying, and sometimes swearing. What a poor creature is man without religion! Newton died of the same disorder, which was attended, at times, with such severe paroxysms as forced out large drops of sweat down his face. In these trying circumstances, however, he was never observed to utter the smallest complaint, or to express the least impatience. What a striking contrast between the conduct of the infidel and the Christian!

The following is an extraordinary instance of the goodness, and the power of Omnipotence, to one of his benighted children, related by Frederic Smith, a minister of the Society of Friends, in London, in a letter to John Murray, extracted from the Christian Disciple:—

I became acquainted with a native of Ireland, F——— N———, who, in his early youth, went to Germany, where he was educated in one of the colleges; and was brought up in the Roman catholic persuasion; the inconsistency of which, he told me, he very early saw. The bigotry, superstition and wickedness of the priests, were such as to give him a disgust to religion; believing, he said, that the foundation of it was dissimulation and priestcraft.

When he left the university he was introduced to the Emperor Joseph the second, to whom he was one of the lords of the bed-chamber; and he became an officer of rank in the German army; a part of which he commanded in a war against the Turks. The emperor made him a count, in addition to his hereditary titles of marquis and viscount of Valadesto, in Spain; he was also a grandee of the first order in that kingdom; besides which he was related to some of the first nobility in England and Ireland.

At the commencement of our first acquaintance, he express-

ed a wish to know something of the principles of Friends ; and having read Barclay's Apology, on returning it, he told me, it was the best written book on divinity he had ever seen ; and if it were possible to act according to the sentiments contained in it, no man could act wrong ; but he added, " I have something to say to you in private, and which I hardly dare to say to any other man. Unfortunately for me, I do not believe in any system of religion : I do not even believe in the existence of a God. You may be assured it is a subject that has given me a great deal of thought, and when I came into this protestant country, I had hoped I should have discovered the essence of truth ; and that the protestant clergy would have given the lie to the impressions I had imbibed, from my early prejudices on account of the dissolute and abandoned lives of the Romish clergy. But alas ! I perceive there is the same system of deception carried on in England as in Germany : the clergy have only one thing in view ; and that is the accumulation of wealth, and where it can be done, to endeavour after splendour and aggrandizement. As to their flocks, it is a matter of no consequence to them, whether they are wise or ignorant ; it appears no part of their study to aim at their religious improvement ;* so that I find myself just where I was. I find that all mankind are alike ; they pretend to religion, and that is all ; they talk of it, and there they leave it. As a confirmation of what I say, I may inform you, that on my first coming into these parts, I paid a visit to my relations in Ireland, who shewed me great hospitality and kindness, and as is usual in that country, there were large convivial parties, where neither the manners, nor the conversation would bear much reflection even in an infidel, as I supposed I should be called."

" It happened one evening, that the conversation took a religious turn, in the course of which I inadvertently leaned towards scepticism at least ; on which one of the company hastily said, " surely, sir, you do not doubt the existence of a Supreme Being ?" to which I replied, " what are your sentiments on that subject ?" " Why, sir, my sentiments are these ; I look upon the Almighty as of infinite purity : as the object of both love and fear ; that I am in his immediate presence ; that it is through him I live and move, and have my being ; I consider that I am

* The preceding remarks might be correct in regard to individuals with whom he happened to be acquainted ; but such *wholesale* censures of sects or classes of men are generally unjust. We dissent from each of these churches, and we doubt not that there have been, in both, many dissolute and abandoned men among the clergy ;—still we believe that there have also been many pious and benevolent men, both in the Romish church and in the Episcopal church of England.—*Ed. C. Disciple.*

amenable to him for every action of my life ; that if I do evil voluntarily, I run the hazard of his eternal displeasure, and wretchedness will be my portion ; but if I act according to his will I shall be eternally happy." " Is this, sir, really and truly your belief ? " " Yes, sir, it undoubtedly is, and is also the belief of every well regulated Christian."

" Then, sir, how comes it to pass, that your actions correspond so little with your profession ? Is it possible that such a hearsay evidence as this, would convince me, were I an atheist, of the truth of God's existence ? Has any part of your conduct, since we have been so often together, manifested either love or fear, or reverence for this object of your pretended regard ? I wish not to give you offence, but see, whether there is any thing like consistency in your declarations, and in the conduct I am led to fear you are in the habitual practice of." My friend seemed confused and thoughtful, and I immediately turned the discourse to another subject."

I was much struck with so much of this conversation, and was considerably more so, when he told me in confidence, that he had left Germany on account of his objections to serving any longer in the army ; that the thoughts of taking away the life of a fellow man, had become distressing and perplexing to him ; so much so that he could in no way become accessary to the death of a fellow creature.

I felt much interested for this person, and carefully concealed from every one what his sentiments were. I apprehended, where there appeared so much sincerity, the Almighty would in his own time reveal himself to him.

He seemed much gratified in attending our religious meetings, and I have many times seen him much affected and in tears in them. He used frequently in a modest way, to argue the point of his disbelief with me, but never I believe, as to himself, to much purpose. I lent him several books where the existence of a God was treated on, but all seemed unavailing. He had made notes in a bible I had lent him, almost throughout the whole book, in opposition to its precepts and doctrine ; and towards the close of the period of his infidelity he requested I would lend him Newton's Principia, which I refused : on the belief, that he had wandered so much in the dark, by seeking *for that without*, which was only truly to be found within, I advised him to keep his mind still and quiet, adding, that I believed the Almighty would one day make himself known to him ; but he must not be surprised, if he should do it in such a way, as to all outward appearance, would in his view be contemptible. A few weeks after this, two female friends, Ann Christy and Deborah Moline, having a concern to visit the families of Friends who at-

tended Westminster meeting ; and as he had been a pretty constant attendant, and was desirous of sitting with the Friends, his name was set down with two others ; and I requested the Friends to let me sit with them. Very soon after we were seated, divine goodness was pleased to overshadow this little assembly. The poor object of this little narrative in a few minutes burst into tears, and continued in this humble state for nearly twenty minutes before a word was uttered ; when one of the females (A. C.) unlettered and unlearned as to human attainments, but who had waited for Christ to be her instructor, in a few words expressed herself to this effect ; that she had felt an extraordinary solemnity on her first sitting down, which had continued to the present time, so much so, that she feared to speak, although she feared to keep silence, more especially as the subject which had come before her, was of a truly awful and solemn nature. " Surely," she added, " there is no person present, who has any doubts respecting the existence of a Supreme Being. If there is, I would have such look into their own hearts, and observe the secret operations of a *something* there, they cannot but feel, more especially when they have committed an evil action : how does it torment the poor mind, and render it for a time in continual uneasiness. On the other hand, when they have acted well, have avoided the temptations to evil, what a sweet glow of approbation has covered the mind. From whence proceeds this uneasiness or this approbation ? it must proceed from something. Man could not communicate these sensations to himself. Be assured they come from God. Nay, it is God himself who thus speaks in the inmost of the heart." The Friend said but little more ; to the person it was addressed to, it was a volume ; it was to him as though the windows of Heaven were opened. To myself, it was an opportunity never to be forgotten.

About two days from the above period, my friend called on me in the evening, and requested to have some conversation with me, which I readily agreed to. Without any preface he told me, that he knew not how he could be sufficiently grateful to me for the patience I had endured with him ; or for the kind concern I had invariably manifested for his welfare, but he added, " I believe it will give you inconceivable pleasure to be informed, that I have now not a doubt remaining. I am abundantly thankful to that Almighty Being, who in mercy has made himself known to this poor benighted heart of mine, in some degree through the instrumentality of that dear woman, though I may acknowledge to you, that before a word was spoken the business was nearly effected. I had taken great pains, as you know, to invalidate the scripture testimony ; but at that solemn and heavenly opportunity, all the arguments I had made use of for this

purpose, reverted back, and I became confounded and ashamed : I felt as it were all at once, the certain evidence of a kind and merciful God ; which so overcame me, that I could only show my love and gratitude, by my tears, so that for a while I appeared to myself in Heaven ; that is, in a situation of mind, far beyond what any earthly mortal could bestow. The dear woman was doubtless sensible of my situation, and confirmed to me the evidence I had felt in my own soul."

"I this evening thought, that though I had been thus favoured it would be difficult to point out or explain the Divinity of Christ, a thing which I then conceived as altogether absurd. But on coming up your steps and waiting to speak to you, the whole mystery was unfolded with the greatest clearness and satisfaction to my own mind ; and now I have no doubts on that subject."

He also entered on the subject of the creation of man, his fall, his complete redemption through Jesus Christ ; and other religious topics, in a way that struck me with astonishment, because his explanations though confirming, as to the evidence of these great and important truths, were conveyed in language very dissimilar to what has usually been written on these subjects. In short, it appears as if a ray of divine light and intelligence had been afforded him, as a certain confirming seal to the evidence he had felt of the being and of the power of God.

His very nature at this time, seemed altered, and his countenance seemed changed ; as from the haughtiness, which his outward rank in society had given him, his disposition now became mild and passive, like a little child, joined to the simplicity and innocence of a lamb. Soon after this occurrence, he called on me one morning, when during the previous night there had been a dreadful storm attended with violent thunder and lightning. He related his feelings at that time, which were very striking. He said, that previous to this storm, he had never known what the fear of death was : he had supposed it to be mere annihilation, and that both soul and body would be destroyed at the moment of death ; the fear of which had never given him any concern ; but now it was different ; he saw his awful situation ; that perhaps in an instant he should be in the presence of that Being he had contemned during his whole life.

His sins were ranged in order before him, and he felt all the horrors of self-condemnation and fear. In this situation he was led to pray fervently for forgiveness for the past, and preservation for the future. It was a new scene in the period of his life, the effect of which, words could not express. After his mind had been thus graciously visited, and enlightened, his natural imperious temper would sometimes show itself, with sudden

fits of passion ; for this he was always penitent, and often expressed his sorrow. Perhaps this was permitted to convince him of the necessity of watchfulness, and that he should guard against too great dependence on past experience, or too much confidence in his natural strength, and that in order to reap all the advantages, of so much divine favour, great humility and self-abasement would be necessary.

Olympia Fulvia Morata, was one of the earliest and brightest ornaments of the Reformation. She could declaim in Latin, converse in Greek, and was a critic in the most difficult classics. But after it pleased God by his grace to open the eyes of her mind to discover the truth, she became enamoured of the sacred Scriptures, above all other books, and studied them by day and by night. And when dissolution approached, she declared she felt nothing but “an inexpressible tranquillity and peace with God through Christ.”—Her mouth was full of the praises of God, and she emphatically expressed herself by saying—“I am nothing but joy.”

Hervey was an excellent scholar, and a believer in the Bible, with its most distinguishing truths. When he apprehended himself to be near the close of life, and stood, as it were, on the brink of the grave, with eternity full in view, he wrote to a friend at a distance to tell him what were his sentiments in that awful situation. “I have been too fond” said he “of reading every thing valuable and elegant that has been penned in our language, and been peculiarly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity : but were I to renew my studies, I would take leave of those accomplished trifles ; I would resign the delights of modern wits, amusement, and eloquence, and devote my attention to the Scriptures of Truth. I would sit with much greater assiduity at my divine Master’s feet, and desire to know nothing in comparison of Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

After this, when his dissolution drew still nearer, he said to those about him :—“how thankful am I for death ! It is the passage to the Lord and Giver of eternal life.—O welcome, welcome, welcome death ! thou mayest well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian ! To live is Christ, but to die is gain ! Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy most holy and comfortable word ; for mine eyes have seen thy precious salvation.”

John Wilmot, afterwards earl of Rochester, was born in 1647, at Ditchley in Oxfordshire. After his education was completed.

he travelled into France and Italy; and, at his return, devoted himself to the court, and was in great favour with Charles the second. He had very early an inclination to intemperance, which he seemed to have totally subdued in his travels; but afterwards falling into dissolute and vicious company, he gave way to his former propensity; and became corrupt in his principles, and depraved in his manners. He lost all sense of religious restraint; and, finding it not convenient to admit the authority of laws which he was resolved not to obey, sheltered his wickedness behind infidelity.

As he excelled in that noisy and licentious merriment which wine incites, his companions eagerly encouraged him in excess, and he willingly indulged it. Thus, in a course of drunken gaiety, and gross sensuality, with seasons of study perhaps yet more criminal, with an avowed contempt of all decency and order, a total disregard to every moral, and a resolute denial of every religious obligation, he lived worthless and useless, and blazed out his youth and his health in lavish voluptuousness; till, at the age of one and thirty, he had nearly exhausted the fund of life, and had reduced himself to a state of weakness and decay. But, when, like the prodigal in the gospel, he came to himself, his mind was filled with the most extreme horror, which forced sharp and bitter invectives from him against himself; terming himself the vilest wretch that the sun ever shone upon; wishing he had lived in a dungeon, rather than offended God in the manner he had done.

Upon the first visit of Mr. Parsons to him, on May 26th, 1680, after a journey from the west, he found him labouring under great trouble of mind, and his conscience full of terror. The earl told him—"When on his journey, he had been arguing with greater vigour against God and religion, than ever he had done in his life-time before, and that he had been resolved to run them down with all the argument and spite in the world; but like the great convert, Paul, he found it hard to kick against God." At this time, however, his heart was so powerfully affected, that he argued as much for God and religion, as ever he had done against them.—He had such tremendous apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, mingled with such delightful contemplations of his nature and perfections, and of the amiableness of religion, that he said,—“I never was advanced thus far towards happiness in my life before; though upon the commission of some sins extraordinary, I have had some considerable checks and warnings from within; but still I struggled with them, and so wore them off again. One day at an atheistical meeting in the house of a person of quality, I undertook to manage the cause, and was the principal dispu-

tant against God and religion ; and for my performances received the applauses of the whole company.—Upon this my mind was terribly struck, and I immediately replied thus to myself—“ Good God, that a man that walks upright, that sees the wonderful works of God, and has the use of his senses and reason, should use them to the defying of his Creator!—But though this was a good beginning towards my conversion, to find my conscience touched for my sins, yet it went off again : nay, all my life long, I had a secret value and reverence for an honest man, and loved morality in others. But I had formed an odd scheme of religion to myself, which would solve all that God or conscience might force upon me ; yet I was never reconciled to the business of Christianity ; nor had I that reverence for the gospel of Christ, which I ought to have had.”

This state of mind continued till the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah was read to him, together with some other parts of the sacred Scriptures ; when it pleased God to fill his mind with such peace and joy in believing, that it was remarkable to all about him, upon which he used to enlarge in a very familiar and affectionate manner, applying the whole to his own humiliation and encouragement.

“ O blessed God,” would he say, “ can such a horrid creature as I am, be accepted by thee, who have denied thy Being, and contemned thy power ? Can there be mercy and pardon for me ? Will God own such a wretch as I ? ”

In the middle of his sickness he said still farther :—“ Shall the unspeakable joys of heaven be conferred on me ? O mighty Saviour, never but through thine infinite love and satisfaction ! O never but by the purchase of thy blood : ”—adding—“ that with all abhorrence he reflected upon his former life—that from his heart he repented of all that folly and madness of which he had been guilty.”

He had a strong and growing esteem for the sacred Scriptures, and evidently saw their divine fulness and excellency :—“ For, having spoken to his heart, he acknowledged, all the seeming absurdities and contradictions fancied by men of corrupt and reprobate judgments, were vanished ; and the excellency and beauty of them appeared conspicuously, now that he was come to receive the truth in the love of it.”

During his illness he had a hearty concern for the pious education of his children, wishing “ his son might never be a wit, one of those wretched creatures who pride themselves in abusing God and religion, denying his Being or his Providence ; but that he might become an honest man ; and of a truly religious character, which only could be the support and blessing of his family.”

One of his companions coming to see him on his death-bed he said to him :—" O remember that you condemn God no more. He is an avenging God, and will visit you for your sins ; and will, I hope, in mercy touch your conscience, sooner or later, as he has done mine.—You and I have been friends and sinners together a great while, therefore I am the more free with you.—We have been all mistaken in our conceits and opinions ; our persuasions have been false and groundless ; therefore I pray God grant you repentance."

When he drew towards the last stage of his sickness, he said, " If God should spare me yet a little longer time here, I hope to bring glory to his name, proportionably to the dishonour I have done to him in my whole life ; and particularly by my endeavours to convince others, and to assure them of the danger of their condition, if they continue impenitent ; and to tell them how graciously God hath dealt with me."

And when he came within still nearer views of dissolution, about three or four days before it, he said,—“ I shall now die : but, Oh ! what unspeakable glories do I see ! What joys, beyond thought or expression am I sensible of ! I am assured of God's mercy to me through Jesus Christ ! Oh ! how I long to die, and be with my Saviour !”

For the admonition of others, and to undo as much as was in his power, the mischief of his former conduct, he subscribed the following recantation, and ordered it to be published after his death :—

“ For the benefit of all those, whom I may have drawn into sin by my example and encouragement, I leave to the world this my last declaration ; which I deliver in the presence of the great God, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and before whom I am now appearing to be judged : That from the bottom of my soul I detest and abhor the whole course of my former wicked life ; that I think I can never sufficiently admire the goodness of God, who has given me a true sense of my pernicious opinions and vile practices, by which I have hitherto lived without hope, and without God in the world : have been an open enemy to Jesus Christ, doing the utmost despite to the Holy Spirit of grace : and that the greatest testimony of my charity to such, is to warn them, in the name of God, as they regard the welfare of their immortal souls, no more to deny his Being or his Providence, or despise his goodness ; no more to make a mock of sin, or condemn the pure and excellent religion of my ever-blessed Redeemer, through whose merits alone, I, one of the greatest of sinners, do yet hope for mercy and forgiveness. Amen.”

John Janeway was born in Herefordshire, in the year 1633. He was remarkable for his piety and love of mankind, for an exemplary conduct through life, and a happy triumphant death.

Before he was thirteen years of age, he had made a considerable proficiency in the mathematics, in the science of astronomy, and in other branches of useful literature. At the age of seventeen, he was chosen to King's College, in Cambridge; and when he was about eighteen, it pleased Divine goodness to open his understanding, and discover to him, that the knowledge of his Creator, and the consciousness of an interest in his love, through Jesus Christ, was infinitely superior to every attainment and possession of this world. Though he had a just sense of the value of learning and knowledge, yet he now "counted every thing but as dross and dung, in comparison of the knowledge of Christ, and him crucified." From this period of his life to the conclusion of it, he continued to rise above the world, and to labour for purity of heart, and acceptance in the Divine sight.

When he fell into a decline, and had but little prospect of life, he was far from being alarmed with the view of his dissolution. "I am ashamed," he said, "to desire and pray for life. Is there any thing here more desirable than the enjoyment of Jesus Christ? Can I desire any thing below comparable to that blessed vision? O that crown! that rest which remains for the people of God! and, blessed be God, I can say, I know it is mine."

Near the close of life, most of his work was praise. Admiring the boundless love of God to him, he said; "O, why these favours to me, Lord? why to me?—Praise is now my work, and I shall be engaged in that sweet employment for ever. O, help me to praise him. I have nothing else to do. I have done with prayer; I have almost done with conversing with mortals. I shall soon behold Christ himself, who died for me, and loved me, and washed me in his blood. I shall shortly be in eternity, singing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. I shall presently stand upon mount Sion, with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. I shall hear the voice of multitudes, and be one among them who say: 'Hallelujah! glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God!'"

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

MEMOIRS

OF

CAROLINE E. SMELT.



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No. 23.

EXTRACTS, &c.

CAROLINE ELIZABETH SMELT,* the subject of the following narrative, was born in the city of Augusta, in the state of Georgia, December 28th, 1800. Many circumstances occurred in the dawn of her life calculated to delight and increase parental affection: which are so far effaced by time and succeeding events, as only to leave on the memory a general impression that they gave rise to pleasing hopes of future excellence.

When she was about six years old, it was thought expedient to send her to a dancing school. Nearly all her little school-mates had already entered. It was proposed to her; she evinced disapprobation; but, with her usual submission, yielded to the wishes of those whom she loved. She was taken by her mother, who supposed, that as soon as Caroline should see her young friends, and hear the music, she would be reconciled to remain. But on entering the school she discovered great agitation and terror, entreated her mother not to leave her, and burst into tears. Mrs. Smelt, much surprised and disconcerted, returned home with her, and inquired the cause of her agitation. Still trembling, she replied, "My dear mamma, I cannot tell you, but I felt so much alarm, I could not stay. I hope you will never desire me to go to that school again. I can hop and jump about enough at home, without going to that school to learn." Her mother then told her that she had mortified her exceedingly by exposing her weakness before so many persons, many of whom would probably call her a spoiled baby, and charge the fault to her. Caroline then replied, "I do not regard any reproaches my conduct on this occasion may bring upon me, if you will forgive me, and not desire me to go again."

No further attempt was made to have her taught dancing until she was ten years old. She then showed the same disapprobation, and the same submission. She was told, that it was an accomplishment which her friends wished her to acquire; that it would qualify her better for appearing in that society in which she was intended to move; and would contribute much to render her easy and graceful in her deportment. She smiled, and observed "it was strange reasoning; and that anything so

* This tract is extracted, by permission, from the "Memoirs of the Life of Miss Caroline E. Smelt," a very interesting work recently printed at New-York.

light and trifling in its nature, should qualify her better for the society of rational beings was surprising." She entered, and soon became what the world calls an elegant and graceful dancer. Before the expiration of the last quarter, she requested leave to retire; observing that her friends had complimented her on the proficiency she had made; and as she had answered their wishes, she begged leave to give up further attendance on the school. She was persuaded to finish the quarter; but frequently, when preparing for the dance, would shed tears, and say that she "felt great repugnance to bestow so much time on a thing of which she never should be fond." For this her friends were unable to account, as there was not the least tincture of melancholy in her disposition. On the contrary, she was extremely cheerful and happy, but never volatile; sprightly and animated in conversation, but never countenanced or descended to levity.

She was early distinguished for her love of truth; insomuch, that she was frequently called upon to decide little disputes in school; it being generally admitted by the contending parties, that Caroline Smelt would not tell a falsehood, even to screen herself from censure. Her friends have no recollection of her ever having deserved a reproof for deviating from strict veracity. She viewed falsehood as one of the most degrading and unprofitable vices, and a very high offence against Him who knoweth all things.

At the close of the thirteenth year, Caroline had attained the stature of a woman. Being tall and slender, her close application to study, and the death of her little sister, occasioned her health, (which had always before been good) to become rather delicate. A journey was advised; and accordingly, in the spring of 1814 she set out, accompanied by her mother, on a journey to New-York, to visit a number of beloved relations, who resided in that city.

Having spent eight months in travelling and visiting their friends, they returned home by the same route by which they had gone: after which Caroline resumed her studies, partly under private instructors. At this period she manifested an increasing ambition to acquire literary knowledge, which her mother feared would occupy her whole attention, to the exclusion of every other consideration. Mrs. Smelt frequently admonished her, at least, to equalize her attention, and not devote the whole of her time to that, which, however laudable in itself, she was carrying to an extreme. She has since confessed, that the thirst for human knowledge had excited in her mind so much ambition to be considered learned, and to be distinguished for her intellectual attainments, that she frequently feared her desires to be a Christian were suffering considerable abate-

ment; that her judgment was not sufficiently matured to enable her rightly to divide her time; that she stood in great need of the admonitory cautions which she used to receive from her mother, as they generally tended to humble her aspiring notions, and bring her to serious reflections. She once said, "My beloved mother, how thankful do I feel that I was brought, through grace, to see there was time for all things; that the improvement of my youthful mind need not exclude piety, but that both could sweetly harmonize; and every talent intrusted to my care, when properly exercised, might redound to the glory of God." She had now arrived at the commencement of her sixteenth year; her principles were pure, her manners dignified, and extremely modest.

After continuing her history, the writer of it states that on the 13th of August her mother was taken sick. The first symptoms gave reason to believe that she would have a severe attack. The fever which had appeared in the city was raging with great violence. She had been much exposed to it, and for four or five days and nights previous to her attack, she had been sitting up and attending to an orphan child, who died that evening in the fourteenth year of her age. Finding herself unwell, and the child dying, she returned home, stated the little sufferer's situation to her daughter, but did not mention her own symptoms. Caroline expressed a desire to see the dying orphan, as she had never seen any person die. She went; the distance was only to the next door. She staid some time; returned, and reported the little girl to be in convulsive agonies. She could not stay to see the end; such sufferings she had never before witnessed. She was bathed in tears, and overwhelmed with sorrow. Her fears were immediately excited on her mother's account, because she saw that she was ill. In conversation with her mother after her recovery, to whom she gave the most assiduous attention, Caroline said to her, "O mamma, I have long wished to tell you what was passing in my heart; but I feared to excite hopes in your affectionate breast which might never be realized, and the greater condemnation would be my portion. But I have now come to a decided stand. It may give you some comfort to hear some of my late exercises. I feel as if I could no longer keep them a secret from you. I ought to have told you them before, and you would have strengthened me. I felt this the other night, when I thought I should lose you; and I then determined, that if the Lord spared your life, you should know all. O! I see, in the hour of sore distress, that all created comforts are but broken reeds—that if we have not God for our friend, 'vain is the help of man.' This I realized in the night when you were taken sick. It was the first time I ever tasted

the bitterness of real sorrow. I had been that afternoon and evening much exercised at the dying bed of our little friend. I never had such feelings in all my life—I viewed with horror the change in her countenance—I saw her struggles—the sight was more than I could bear. I said, is this death? He is indeed the king of terrors. I was about to hasten home: I stopped a little longer—I thought I would summon fortitude to stay and see the end—a convulsion came on—I was exceedingly alarmed—I thought I must retire; but in an instant it occurred to me, that I too would have to die; and if every one who might be around my dying couch should act towards me as I was about to do towards her, not one would have firmness enough to see my end—and how should I feel, to be deserted at such an awful moment? O! how fervently did I desire that the Lord would not call me till I was made fit for his acceptance. I wanted to feel that love that casteth out fear; but I was tempest-tossed, and could realize nothing that was comfortable. I returned home melancholy and oppressed, and found you had retired to bed with a high fever. My heart was overwhelmed with apprehensions for your life and my own soul. Some such reflections as these then passed through my mind. You now see what a vain bubble this world is—what a change have a few hours made in your feelings! and a few more may produce still greater. I sometimes thought I would give worlds, if I possessed them, to know that the Lord was my friend. I clearly saw that no power but his could deliver me; and that it was vain to expect relief from any other quarter. I felt as if the world would contain nothing that could afford me any consolation, if you were removed; and particularly, I should never forgive myself for not having improved, as I ought, the many lessons of useful instruction you had given me.

“My thoughts often recurred to the dying child. I said, what is all the world to her now? She cannot swallow so much as one drop of cold water. I may soon see my mother in the same situation. I may soon be in the same condition myself. O! that I could feel the benign influence of the religion of the Savior! for there is nothing but this that can sustain us in the hour of affliction.

“In the morning, I was much comforted, to hear you say you were better. You desired me to be composed, to retire to my own room, and try to get some sleep before breakfast. I retired; but not to sleep. I took with me your small Bible. When I entered my room, I bowed on my knees and poured out my soul in prayer to my Heavenly Father. I felt comforted. I then made a solemn promise, that if the Lord would spare your life, I would engage with my whole heart to serve HIM the residue

of my days on earth, by the aids of his heavenly grace—that I would never again engage in worldly amusements, nor do anything, willingly, to grieve his Holy Spirit.”

On the morning of the 28th of August, she was seized with a sudden vertigo, and in the course of the succeeding night a most violent fever came on, which was never perfectly subdued. On the second day of September, her symptoms exhibited no favorable change; in the afternoon, her mother was requested by her to read a portion of scripture, which was done. She then said, “My dear mamma, I have been much disturbed in mind to-day; but I felt reluctant to oppress you with more trouble than you have already, and therefore forbore telling you. But I cannot conceal it any longer.” Her mother then invited her to tell her all. She said that she had all day been disturbed by this passage of scripture, ‘The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.’ “It is continually in my mind, and fills me with dreadful apprehensions.” Mrs. Smelt then observed, “If that passage gives my darling distress, let your mother direct you to a few of the precious promises:” and then repeated to her the following: “Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” She said she felt oppressed with a sense of sin. Her mother then repeated, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

Mrs. Smelt, observing her to be much agitated at that time, was enabled, with great energy, to say to her, “My beloved daughter, the Lord says, ‘Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.’ This promise is sent to you, my child, as certainly as it was sent to me many years ago.” She replied, “Do you indeed think so, my mother?” Her mother assured her that it was her belief. The necessity of exercising a lively faith in the merits of the Redeemer was then strongly urged upon her. She said she wanted to feel that she had an interest in Christ—that she feared she had never been regenerated; repeating, “Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” “O that I could know that I had passed through the new birth.” Her mother begged her to look to the compassionate Savior, and be comforted.

After some short time, Caroline said, “Let perfect silence be observed, and do you, my mother, engage with me in silent prayer to God for a manifestation of his acceptance of my immortal soul.” They then commenced their silent devotions; and in about half an hour afterwards, Dr. Smelt entered the

room—felt her pulse, and said, “My dear Caroline, I have just been called upon to visit, in consultation, a sick lady in our neighborhood. I will be absent only fifteen or twenty minutes. You must not be uneasy; for you have less fever than you had at this time yesterday; and I hope you will have a very comfortable night.” Her hands were still clasped, nor had she opened her eyes while he addressed her. Supposing her silence to be a mark of her disapprobation of his leaving her, her father said in a tone of affection, “You do not wish me to go, Caroline?” She then spoke and said, “O yes, go, papa, but do not stay longer than you can possibly help.” He then left the room, and she was still observed to continue her devotion.

Everything remained in perfect silence until her father returned, which was about twenty minutes afterwards. He entered the room, found her in the same attitude in which he had left her, but a most alarming change in her pulse. He hastily threw himself into an easy chair near her bed-side, and manifested great emotion. He then inquired if it was not time for the visiting physicians to call. Mrs. Smelt, seeing her husband so much alarmed, felt greatly agitated indeed, but was enabled to conceal her concern in a considerable degree. All things remained thus for a few minutes longer. At length silence was interrupted by a knock at the door. Dr. Smelt rose, and observed that he sincerely hoped the doctors had come—thought he would again feel his daughter’s pulse, before he should see the gentlemen. But just as he was about to apply his fingers to her wrist, he was arrested by her voice, which was raised in the softest and most melodious notes of thanksgiving and praise to God and to the Lamb, for the clear, the undoubted manifestation of divine love which she had that moment received, and which filled her mind “with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” She continued in audible, devout exercises, addressed to her God and Savior, for perhaps more than half an hour.

In the mean time, two physicians had entered; but they, as well as her parents, were overwhelmed with astonishment. Caroline was too much absorbed in pious contemplations to notice any person who was then about her. The medical gentlemen then approached the bed, and felt her pulse. Her father was deeply affected, and has since declared it was the most awful moment of his life; for he at first thought her brain had become affected by a sudden translation of the disease to that part; but in a short time he was convinced that this was not the fact.

When her mind returned to the consideration of the objects around her, the first person whom Caroline noticed was her father. In the presence of all in the room at that time, she told

him what the Lord had done for her soul—that He had baptized her with the Holy Ghost—that she had wrestled in prayer only one short hour for the blessing, when she received it. Here her delighted heart broke forth again in the sublimest strains of gratitude to free and sovereign grace for the ransom of her soul. It is a source of regret that no adequate idea can be here communicated of the purity, fervor, and sublimity of this part of her exercises. In short, unless they had been penned down at the time, the one-half could not be recollected. It is affirmed by all who were present, that they never heard or read of anything more angelic.

Shortly afterwards she took a cordial mixture, which revived her strength for the moment, and was desired to speak no more that night. She replied, with a smile, "That is impossible: for my tongue is loosed and my heart is full; and I must speak my Redeemer's praises."

During the night, though perfectly calm, she continued so disposed for exhortation, that her medical friends were compelled to tell her that she would do herself a material injury if she did not invite sleep. She reasoned the matter with them, and told them, that in all things she would be submissive to their judgment, except in that one particular; observing, that she had but little time in which to work; and that she must try to advance the Redeemer's cause while she was blessed with the powers of speech. She exhorted them individually, and then prayed for them collectively. They were sensibly affected, and wept freely. She continued to speak words of comfort to all around her, particularly to her father and mother, until it was near morning; when she fell into a sweet sleep for about two hours. She awoke much refreshed, but with considerable fever. It was the third day of September, and the sixth of her illness. It was thought an important crisis, and that she must be kept very quiet during that day. Through that, and five succeeding days, she was almost exclusively engaged in prayer and praises to God, and admonitions to the many friends who called to see her.

On Monday night, the 8th of September, her fever was very high, and her sufferings very great. The next morning she spoke much of death, and longed for its approach. She admonished many of her young friends, and entreated them to seek an interest in Christ, in preference to all other attainments. Believing her departure to be very near, she took a solemn leave of many who visited her on that day. With a countenance beaming with divine love, and a voice most harmonious, she said to her mother, "O my beloved mother! weep not for me. My sufferings will soon terminate. Blessed be God! who have

not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. Through the blood of the cross, Death is disarmed of all his terrors; the grave, to which I am hastening, is deprived of all victory. Oh the boundless goodness of God! thus to support a frail worm of the dust; for what is man, that he should be mindful of him? or the son-of man, that he should visit him?" Then addressing some young friends who had just entered the room, "You see before you," said she, "a young, timid, delicate female, not yet seventeen years old—the only child of my beloved parents—surrounded with all the comforts of life—nurtured with peculiar tenderness, in the bosom of parental affection, from my earliest infancy, and always sheltered from the rude blasts of misfortune—blessed with the friendship of an extensive acquaintance, and beloved by all my dear relations. I could add many other considerations calculated to attach me to this world; but I can say, with holy joy, farewell to all! yea, I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. I am going to my Redeemer's kingdom: his arms are open to receive me. O! the incalculable benefits resulting from the religion of Jesus, the once crucified, but now gloriously exalted Son of God! What but this, my friends, could sustain me in this trying hour? O! my dear young friends, allow me to entreat you to embrace this religion. To a bed of death you will all have to come; and at the bar of judgment you will have to give an account of all the deeds done by you in this world; and if the Savior is not then your friend, I tremble to think of your fate. O! close with the offers of mercy. Now is the accepted time; to-day is the day of salvation."

One day, after being visited by some pious persons, she observed to her mother, that it afforded her great pleasure to converse with the children of God; "for to them," said she, "I speak in a known tongue. They know the import of every word, having been taught in the same school. O mother, I now understand that passage in the Holy Scriptures, which tells us, the wisdom of man is foolishness with God. It is indeed foolishness—perfect folly. All that I ever knew is but as a drop to the ocean, in comparison with that I now feel and know. The holy Comforter is indeed a divine teacher. Oh! that all the world would seek after true wisdom, for her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace."

September 11th. She appeared so much better, that little doubt was entertained of her recovery. This day she was visited by many friends, and was uncommonly zealous and feeling in her conversation with them. A very intelligent female friend, who heard her on this occasion, afterwards observed that she was the most divine preacher she had ever heard—that her el

quence and fervor far surpassed anything she had ever witnessed—that her voice seemed to partake of the nature of heaven. Her prayers astonished every one. The same friend at another time expressed her surprise at the extraordinary powers which she exhibited. To this Caroline replied, “my mental powers are exceedingly enlarged—the Holy Spirit is my teacher—of myself I could do nothing; but a new tongue hath been given me, and a new spirit put within me. Give God the praise! for he hath said, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings shall praise be perfected.”

On the subject of worldly amusement she was uncommonly earnest and forcible. In speaking on this subject to some friends, she said, “let no person endowed with rational powers call them innocent or harmless. How can that be innocent which leads to a prodigal waste of precious time? How can that thing be called harmless which leads to an unnecessary exposure of health? How can that amusement be innocent which has not the glory of God for its object? How can that amusement be harmless which has a direct tendency to unfit the mind for devotional exercises? We are such frail creatures that we constantly require some excitement to lead us to God, and not to estrange us from him. Will any venture to say that they have been brought to love the Lord Jesus better by having attended a theatre or a ball-room? I presume not. I can say, from my own experience, that I never derived solid improvement or real pleasure from either. From neither of them have I ever derived anything which could afford my mind the least satisfaction in hours devoted to self-examination, nor anything to strengthen the soul against the terrors of death and judgment. I consider them worse than vanity—they are exceedingly sinful.”

In a private interview with her mother, she communicated many of the exercises of her mind since she had been confined to that bed. “Mother,” said she, “let no one call it a bed of affliction; it has been to me a heavenly bed. I wish I could describe the visitation I had on the second night of this month, and which I still feel with a grateful recollection. How mercifully did the Lord deal with me! I was oppressed with a heavy burden: I felt guilty, self-condemned, and bowed down, the passage of scripture which I mentioned constantly ringing in my ears. I felt ill, extremely ill. I was not afraid of death in itself, but I feared the displeasure of God. I knew my situation in life, and a pious education, had kept me from being exposed to gross temptations; but I felt that I had lived in the neglect of many known duties, and in the abuse of many distinguished blessings; that I had stifled many strong convictions, and grieved the Holy Spirit of God, who had been striving with me in va

nious ways ever since I was seven years old. I tried to draw comfort from the recollection that I had for some months past resolved to take a decided stand to serve the Lord; but how did I know that he would accept my imperfect services after such rebellion against him? I remembered the anxiety which I felt to return to this house. I had resolved, as soon as we got settled, to commence a new system of devotion, and was impatient to begin. The first night on which I returned to the occupancy of my chamber deserves to be remembered. As soon as I found myself alone, I prostrated myself on the carpet, and poured out my soul in prayer to my Heavenly Father. I resolved, by his assistance, to make it an important period in my life; and from that moment to give up all worldly amusements. I made a solemn promise never to dance another step; never to enter a theatre again, nor to resort to places of festivity and mirth. I considered them as all belonging to the same family, and injurious to a growth in grace. I then pleaded, with tears and great fervency, that my God and Savior would condescend to consecrate my chamber; that he would make it a little Bethel, where he would often meet me. I then felt so comforted and strengthened in my good resolutions, that I had no doubt of my prayer being answered. But on the second day of this month, I received no consolation from a review of those circumstances; no, not a ray of light from any quarter. Worlds would I have given for an interest in the redemption purchased by the blessed Redeemer. Without this, I felt I was for ever lost. I strove to be fervent in prayer; but many friends called, and I was much interrupted. My whole system seemed as if in a furnace. I was alarmed. I desired you to engage with me in silent prayer. O! then my wrestlings commenced, and for one hour, one short hour, they continued, at the end of which period I was most wonderfully blessed. What I felt at that moment can never be described. The Spirit of God was in my soul, nor can I express the half of what he then revealed to me. Indeed I dare not attempt to describe the manifestation which I then received. I felt the power of the Holy Ghost; I felt that my soul was ransomed by the blood of the cross; every sin washed away, and my name recorded in the Lamb's book of life. Love to God and love to his people filled my heart. I knew of a truth that Jesus was mine, and I was his; and from that moment to this, my faith, my views, have been the very same, though my ecstasies have not always been equally great. One small cloud or temptation, and one only, has Satan been permitted to cast in my way, and that only for a few minutes. The Hearer of prayer soon removed it. I believe it was permitted to show me my weakness,

and to try my faith; but the Lord soon said to my soul 'fear not, for I am with thee.' "

September 13th. Having rested very comfortably during the preceding night, she was this day, to all appearance, considerably better. She was cheerful, and observed to her mother that she began to think that the Lord might intend to restore her to health; that the preceding evening she had felt a strong impression that she should soon be removed, "that is," said she, "I hoped so, but I was not impatient: I felt perfect submission, for while I am fed with such rich provisions, I have nothing to fear. But to-day I have felt such a revival of bodily strength, that I do not know but God may spare me to you and my dear father a little longer, perhaps for some years."

In the evening she was so much better, that her physicians indulged her in a wish to sit up in an easy chair. When she was about to rise, she desired that none but her mother and a faithful servant should assist her. As soon as she left the bed, she took Mrs. Smelt by the arm, and said, "now, mother, kneel by the side of this bed with me." They kneeled down; after which she offered up a most evangelical prayer, in which she implored grace to make her thankful for being raised from the first sick bed upon which she had ever been laid—and that whether she lived months, days, weeks or years, she might live to the glory of God—that she might ever be mindful of the manifestations of divine love which she had received in that room and on that bed,—that she might never be allowed to sin because grace abounded, but that she might always feel the same holy submission, the same holy desires, which then filled her heart.

September 14th. Her appearance this day inspired her friends with still stronger hopes of her recovery. The physicians directed her again to sit up half an hour. In the evening she was observed to be very feeble, but still much inclined to conversation; and everything she said was so interesting and instructive, that it was a difficult matter to impose silence upon her. Mrs. Smelt at length expressed to her a fear lest she would do herself an injury; and requested her to forbear for a little while, at least until she recovered a little more strength. To this Caroline replied, with a sweet smile, "my dear mother, do not fear. When I feel the greatest prostration of bodily strength, I am then strongest in the Lord. My bed has been to me a heavenly one—my chamber has been a Bethel, for here has the Lord condescended to meet with me—here has he poured out his Spirit upon me—here has he answered my prayers, and here will I raise my Ebenezer, for hitherto hath

the Lord helped me. O my mother! let these things excite in your heart fresh confidence and gratitude to God, whose mercies are renewed to us every morning, and repeated every evening—every moment.”

September 16th. On the morning of this day, her fever was somewhat abated, but she was evidently weaker; yet perfectly tranquil and heavenly-minded. A pious friend called to see her in the forenoon of this day. She immediately began to tell her what the Lord had done for her soul—expressed great concern for the state of the church in Augusta—spoke with great feeling of the awful declension in religion—prayed that God would visit her native city with an outpouring of his Spirit—that he would stir up the church-members to greater zeal in the cause of Zion, and entreated that all who named the name of Christ might be less conformed to the fashion of this world, and more conformed to the simplicity of the gospel—that they might be made to frown on sinful amusements and all extravagant follies—and to exhibit, on all occasions, an example worthy of imitation, and expressive of the hope that is in them.

September 17th. About nine o'clock of this day, a most violent chill came on, which was succeeded by a higher fever than she had ever had before. Her sufferings were great, but not a murmur was she heard to utter.

September 18th. During this day, great languor came on her whole system. Mrs. Smelt observed to her, “My beloved child, your sufferings are very great.” She replied, with a sweet smile, “Not greater, my mother, than I can bear.”

September 20th. This morning she appeared to revive a little. Her mother said to her “My beloved Caroline, you are very ill; how are your feelings to-day? is your faith as strong in the Lord Jesus as ever? are you as willing to depart, and are your views of divine mercy as great, as clear as they have been?” She replied, with a countenance beaming with divine love, “Just the same, just the same. My heavenly Father has never left me; and whether I live or die, it will be to the glory of God.” She said much more, which cannot be accurately recollected; but every sentiment which she expressed breathed the strongest confidence, and sweetest resignation to the will of God.

It was soon discovered that her speech began to fail. Her mother took leave of her with forced composure. She shortly afterwards fell asleep, and never spoke again. She continued in this state for several hours; after which, on Sabbath evening, the 21st September, 1816, her happy spirit was released from “the earthly house of its tabernacle,” and took its flight to the arms of Jesus. Not a single struggle—not the smallest distur-

tion of features, nor even the movement of a single limb, appeared in her last moments. She was gone some seconds before the many kind friends who surrounded her dying couch had ascertained that her spirit had indeed departed.

It is a source of regret to the friends of the deceased Caroline, that many incidents which occurred, and many of the conversations which she held during her illness, cannot be accurately recollected, so as to warrant an insertion here. There were two interviews between herself and her parents, an account of which has not been given in its proper place, because the particular dates are not known with certainty; yet, as the circumstances are distinctly remembered, it has been thought proper to subjoin some notice of them here.

In the first, which was with her father, she said, "Father, I know that you have many sterling virtues, and you have been an excellent parent to me. As you profess to be a true believer in revealed religion, let me entreat you earnestly to seek for that faith which is only the gift of God. It must come from above, and O! pray ardently and frequently for this gift—the baptism, the anointing of the Holy Ghost, that precious Comforter promised by the Savior to all who ask him. O my father! I have received it; I feel it in my soul: I want you to feel it, for it will prepare you to meet me in heaven." At no great distance of time from the preceding interview with her father, she held the following conversation with her mother.

She said, "Mother, I wish you to deliver a message from me to my beloved sister-cousin, Cornelia Walker, (who was then absent on a visit to her friends in New-York.) I wish you to tell her of all that the Lord has done for me. Tell her that I desire her never again to participate in sinful amusements. She loves me, and will, I hope, value what I say. Tell her I requested, on my death-bed, that she might never enter a theatre, a ball-room, or attend another fashionable tea-party, as they are called. They are all of the same family, let who will say otherwise. If one of them be sinful, they are all so; and on that subject I have no doubt. I am also of opinion that the last mentioned are more so, if possible, than either of the others. Tea-parties, as generally attended, lead to more extravagance and party-spirit, more vanity, more ambition, than the others. I have some knowledge of all: I have been at many tea-parties, and I know I have never seen more folly anywhere. The great amusement consists in a display of luxurious delicacies, which are continually carried round by poor slaves, that bend under their weight, and which only vitiate the stomach, and unfit it for wholesome food. More ostentation, or greater excess of vanity, is never seen at plays or balls. I have sat for hours, and

not heard one serious observation, one rational idea. On the contrary, I have heard nothing but loud peals of laughter, or light frivolous chit-chat—perfect levity—nothing else. I generally attended with reluctance; and nothing but a desire to conform to the customs of the society in which I moved, ever induced me to go. Silly excuse! for my better judgment told me better things. I am sorry that so many of our serious people countenance these things, and declaim against the others. There is a strange inconsistency in this, which gives the world a great reason to say what they do—that such professors strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Mother, you will never, I hope, give them your countenance again, for you must know that they are pernicious to a growth in grace. I do not wish you to give up society—Oh no—for religion is a social thing. I wish you and her to keep up a rational intercourse with all our dear friends, but let it be done with gospel simplicity. My dear uncle W. will, perhaps, think I have made an unreasonable demand of my cousin, in requesting her to give up dancing; but he loves me, and if she is willing, he will not oppose her. Tell her that on a death-bed she will be amply rewarded for all the self-denial she puts in practice now. O mother! tell her to seek an interest in Christ, while she is in the bloom of life. It ill becomes those who name the name of Jesus, and who have made a solemn covenant to be his, to mix with the world, and join in extravagant, volatile, and trifling pleasures. We are told that we cannot serve God and mammon; and this is true. They will find it so when they come to die. O! what a different example ought Christians to set before the world! I have wondered to hear the excuses which some professors make for folly. They say that we are social beings—that we require relaxation—that God is more merciful than man—that while we are in the world we must mix with it—we must have society—that religion was never designed to make us melancholy, but cheerful, &c. My strength is too feeble to state all; but admitting these excuses to be true, they only pervert the whole. The Lord abundantly provides for all his dear children, and never requires more of them than they can perform; and he commands us not to be conformed to this world—to be holy as he is holy. What has the great Apostle said? ‘Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; put on the whole armor of God. As ye have, therefore, received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ; for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead

bodily. Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, &c. For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.' I am not unhappy about my cousin; but I feel anxious that she should know these things, and lay them to heart speedily. She is almost a year older than I am and, by this time, has seen enough of the world to know that all its joys are transitory and unsatisfying. To a bed of death she will have to come, and after that the judgment. Tell her that if she embrace the gospel of Christ, in all its purity, she will have nothing to fear. No: it is sweet to die; death is a pleasant friend—the gate to heaven. I long to meet death; but still I am willing to wait until I have finished the work appointed for me to do. Tell her I loved her much; we were brought up as twin sisters; we lived in delightful harmony together. O! that all children could love one another as we did! and it is natural that I should feel more for her than for my other cousins. But the same message I leave to all, for I love all."

Thus lived, and thus died Caroline Elizabeth Smelt. By the exercise of the numerous amiable qualities which she possessed, she had endeared herself to an extensive circle of friends of all ages, sexes, and ranks in life. She possessed great independence of principle, and would support her opinions with great firmness and propriety; but if convinced of error, would never hesitate to retract and acknowledge it. To servants she was particularly mild; and as she made her requests to those of her father's household with the utmost softness, they always served her with the greatest alacrity. In a word, reverence towards God, filial submission and respect towards her parents—affability and benevolence towards all with whom she was acquainted, seem to have been united in her temper and practice through life, and "in her death they were not divided."

ON

W O R S H I P,

M I N I S T R Y,

AND

P R A Y E R.



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WORSHIP, MINISTRY, AND PRAYER.

ON WORSHIP.

THE worship of Almighty God is the most solemn act the mind of man is capable of being engaged in. It is an intercourse between him and us, in which the soul, divested of outward things, pours forth all its wants into the bosom of an Almighty Friend, and by the influence of the vital beams of his light and love receives ability to answer his will either in vocal or silent returns of its grateful acknowledgments and praise. This devotion requires a considerable degree of abstraction from the world; that we hear little of it is not wonderful. Superstition has placed it in opinions, ceremonies, austerities, pilgrimages, an august temple, or splendid imagery, which have little connexion with sentiment or spirit. Enthusiasm has obtruded a spurious offspring on the world, instead of this engaging child of reason and truth, whilst the lukewarm have rested in a few outward duties, which have had no vigour, and as they spring not from the heart, never enter the temple of the Most High. Real piety is of a very different, and of a much more animated nature; it looks up to God; sees, hears, feels him in every event, in every vicissitude, in all places, and upon all occasions. It is theory verified by experience, it is faith substantiated by mental enjoyment, it is heaven transplanted into the human bosom, it is the radiance of the divinity warming and encircling man. It is a spiritual sense gratified by spiritual sensations; without this all ceremonies are inefficacious; books, prayers, sacraments, and meditations, are a body without a soul. That man is capable of such an intercourse with his Maker, there are many living witnesses to prove. When minds are in an assimilating state of purity, they have this union with their Maker. This was the bliss of paradise: sin interrupted, and holiness only can restore it; to a soul thus prepared the Creator communicates himself, in a manner, which is as insensible to the natural eye, as the falling of dews, but not less refreshing to its secret powers, than that is to vegetation.

This worship being produced by the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit which it is not in the power of man to command, he must reverently wait for it, as well in his more private approaches to the Sacred Presence, as in the public assem-

blies for the worship of the true God. Nor can the duties of preaching the gospel, or of vocal prayer or praise be rightly performed but by the same quickening virtue immediately exciting thereto. Every thinking person, who is in any degree sensible of the love and fear of God, must esteem it an awful thing to present himself to the especial notice of the Infinite, Omnipresent, Eternal Being; and in consideration of his high and inconceivable majesty, it is our duty to approach him with the greatest reverence. Hence the propriety of the exhortation "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, (or enterest upon worship,) and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and *let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God*; for God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few."* That public worship is an incumbent duty, is manifest from the practice and exhortations of Christ and his apostles; and its benefits are evinced not only by the experience of those who observe it, but by the dissipation and licentiousness which prevail where its obligation is wholly disregarded.

Christ has instructed his disciples to believe, that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is in the midst of them."† As no formal acts without his spirit can constitute divine worship, we must wait for this needful qualification. If the worship of God depended upon the organic powers of our nature, and could not be performed without them, then it must be in part a carnal, and not a purely spiritual worship. No forms of devotion invented by men can supply the place of the Spirit. The apostle says, "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities;"‡ "through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father."§ It is not doubted that the Spirit of Christ may authorise and accompany vocal acts of worship; but where an assembly without waiting for the mind of the Spirit, immediately proceeds to formal acts, there is danger of departing from the will of God and fulfilling the will of man alone. Seeing then, that both our help and access are through the Spirit of Christ, the renewal of which is at his pleasure and not ours, we must necessarily wait for it. This waiting must be in *stillness of mind*, free from all wandering imaginations, and from the expression of words; for the utterance of words is not *waiting*, but acting. Words are necessary to convey the sense of one person to another, but not to that

* Eccles. v. 1, 2. † Matt. xviii. 20. ‡ Rom. viii. 26. § Ephes. ii. 18.

omniscient Being who is an universal Spirit, and everywhere Almighty ; who, therefore, stands not in need of the use of corporeal organs, instruments, or the sound of words to communicate with the spirit of man. As worship consists not in words, neither does it in mere silence, but in an holy dependence of the mind upon God. If an assembly be gathered into outward stillness, and do not attain this necessary abstraction of mind, pure and spiritual worship may not be performed. It is therefore the business of all those assembled, reverently to wait upon God, in order to feel his presence, and to be gathered into his name, where he is in the midst. As every one becomes thus gathered, the secret power and virtue of divine life is known to refresh the soul. And if there be not a word spoken, yet true spiritual worship is performed, and the body of Christ edified.

This silent waiting is so contrary to the wisdom of man, that it is not understood or practised but by those who become subject to the Divine will ; who are convinced that words, even the words of scripture, and all outward ceremony are altogether insufficient to satisfy their weary afflicted souls ; for where all these are used, the divine life and power may be wanting. Feeling the emptiness of mere external performances, and becoming silently attentive to the manifestation of the spirit in the heart, the most excellent teacher, such are taught to cease from their own works, and simply to depend upon God, that as he influences by his grace, they may be qualified, mentally or vocally, to worship before him. If, in order to worship, the mind do not settle into stillness, the passions will be at work, and may agitate into enthusiastic heats and vague imaginations. But in true stillness and singleness of soul towards God, they are silenced and subjected. The still small voice of the inspirer of all good then comes to be heard, and the mind being closely engaged in attention thereto, and answering it in faith and humble submission, feels divine life and love spring up, and receives ability therein truly to worship the great Author of its existence, with a devotion which no forms can reach. This worship is not entered upon by totally laying aside our faculties and falling into a senseless stupor, as some may imagine, but by a real introversion of mind, an attention fixed singly upon the alone object of all adoration, in patient, yet fervent desire after him. And without the intervention of words, the spiritual strength of those thus exercised, is often renewed, and their souls nourished by the holy fellowship and communion of the body and blood of Christ.

Monro, in his "Just measures for the pious institution of Youth," speaking of devotion, says—"When the devout soul is

disengaged from all created things, from sin and self, and corruption, and firmly believing that God who filleth all things, is present in the soul, and ready to display his power, and communicate his light and graces, doth by an act of faith, state himself in his presence, and there having turned the eye of the soul to the interior, and made an entire surrender of himself into the hands of God, with an humble desire, that he would dispose of him as he pleases, and that his holy will may be done in him; he continues in a *profound silence* and recollection, *waiting for the divine good pleasure*. The blessed God, as the experience of many eminently devout persons doth abundantly testify, visits these souls that depend on him, with his peculiar favours, displays in them the riches of his power and grace, and makes them feel, in an ineffable manner, the reality of his presence in their inward man; whence it comes to pass, that they improve wonderfully in every thing that is good, just, and true, pure and lovely, and advance with speed towards Christian perfection."

Silent waiting was practised among the prophets and those who associated with them, as appears in the prophecy of Ezekiel. The spirit of the prophet was engaged in divine vision whilst the elders of Judah sat before him, as it is described from the first verse of the eighth to the twenty-fourth of the eleventh-chapter. During the time of this vision, it cannot be consistently supposed, that he was either speaking to them, or they to him, or to each other. This was not a singular instance of their meeting together, for it was the manner of God's people to congregate with the prophets, as this close reprehension plainly indicates: "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them." The prophet Jeremiah says, "The Lord is good unto them that *wait* for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly *wait* for the salvation of the Lord."* Its advantages are further shown by David and Isaiah: "*I waited patiently* for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry."† "And it shall be said in that day, lo, this is our God, we have *waited* for him and he will save us. This is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."‡ Now, how can we practise this incumbent duty of waiting upon God, and watching before him, but in silence? It is a duty frequently enjoined in the scrip-

* Lam. iii. 25, 26.

† Psal. xl. 1.

‡ Isaiah, xxv. 9.

tures, and must necessarily precede the qualification for the performance of all others in the worship of God.

When the time appointed to end the ceremonial worship of the law had come, Jesus Christ, in restoring the true spiritual worship, prescribed no set form to his children under the more pure administration of the new covenant. In the memorable interview with the woman at Jacob's well, he declared, "the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, (exclusively) worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."* It is no longer then a worship limited to any particular place and consisting of outward observations which man can perform when he pleases: but spiritual, and adapted to the nature of the great object of all adoration and praise. We are exhorted diligently to assemble for the purpose of Divine worship, but the duties of preaching, prayer, and singing, and the order in which they are to be performed, are to be subject to the revelation and direction of the spirit. The apostles "spake as the spirit gave utterance."† They "knew not what to pray for as they ought, but the spirit helped their infirmities and made intercession for them with groanings which could not be uttered."‡ "They prayed with the spirit, they sang with the spirit and with the understanding also."§ And can it be rationally supposed that we are possessed of powers which render us more independent than they were of the necessary aid of the Holy Spirit? As man is excluded from acting in spiritual things in his own will, he must wait for a knowledge of his duty, and the requisite ability to perform it.

It is the principal work of a Christian to know his will brought into subjection to the divine will, for this resignation and self-denial the Lord chiefly regards. Curious speculations on religious subjects may amuse the mind, but being the fruit of man's degenerate will, they cannot contribute to the work of sanctification and redemption. Some may endeavour to terrify themselves from sin, by thoughts of death and eternal judgment; or presenting to their imaginations the joys of heaven, may think to merit them by a repetition of prayers and other religious performances; yet these exercises, without the inward power of God's grace, can never deliver the soul from one iniquity, but are rejected by him, as not being the

* John, iv. 21. 23, 24. † Acts, ii. 4. ‡ Rom. viii. 26. § 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

product of that divine seed of righteousness given for salvation, the fruit of which only, whether a sigh or a groan, is accepted of God. When the soul is brought into this state of silence and nothingness, the enemy of man's happiness is excluded; for he that of old is said to have come to the assemblies of the children of God, may yet deceive the soul by his transformations; and through the imagination, influence it to acts of supposed duty, unless it maintain this state of humble watchfulness before the Author of all its sure mercies. Man being thus reduced into entire dependence upon God, the little seed of righteousness planted in the soul, which Christ has purchased for his salvation, and which is oppressed by his creaturely thoughts and imaginations, receives a place to arise and by waiting therein, he comes to be accepted in the sight of God, to stand in his presence, hear his voice, and to observe the motions of his spirit; and if whilst in this dependent situation there are any objects presented to the mind concerning God, or relating to his religious duty, he may be exercised in them to his own benefit and that of others. But if it please God when any are thus waiting upon him, simply to keep them in a holy dependence, and as they continue therein, to cause the pure incomes of his holy life to flow in upon them, they have good reason to be satisfied, because by this the soul is more strengthened and confirmed in the love of God, and armed against the power of sin, than by any other means; this being a foretaste of that enjoyment of God which the saints in heaven possess, and which he frequently affords to his children for their comfort and encouragement, especially when assembled together to wait upon him.

Although this divine and spiritual devotion may be experienced when our hands are employed in the business of this world, and no doubt many pious souls are poured out before God in secret, under a thankful sense of his mercy and his grace, yet such will be also drawn to assemble together, that they may unite in spirit in this duty. Those who sincerely attend to it, will know the promise fulfilled; "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."*

ON MINISTRY.

Many professing the Christian name, seem to imagine that though the assistance of the Holy Spirit was necessary to the

* Isaiah, xl. 30, 31.

introduction and support of the Christian religion in primitive times, it has no need of it now. It has become so matured by man's wisdom and learning, which had no share in its origin, that it is fully capable of going alone. So that *now* it would appear in great measure to have become another thing, and to stand upon another foundation. Though its professors still call Christ their head, and account themselves his body, yet many of them expect to receive no immediate direction from him, nor to feel the circulation of his blood, which is the life and virtue of true religion. Thus deservedly incurring the reproof of the apostle implied in this query: "Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"* The vitality and glory of Christianity lies in the clear administration of the Holy Spirit, without any veil of legal or ritual representations. School learning is but a human accomplishment, and though very useful as a servant, is yet no part of Christianity. Neither the acquirements of the college, nor the formalities of human authority, can furnish that humility which fitteth for God's teaching. The mind of man is too prone to be puffed up with a conceit of superiority, which leads from self-denial and the daily cross, into pride and self-sufficiency, and instead of waiting for and depending upon the wisdom and power of God, into a confidence in the wisdom of this world, and a devotional satisfaction in the round of external forms and ordinances. Whereas, those that worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.† And why? Because "it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."‡ They who deny that the internal operations of the Holy Spirit are now to be sensibly experienced, only demonstrate their own insensibility thereof. The true people of God in all ages have declared their own undoubted sense of divine illumination and help, and the apostle in Rom. vii. and viii. testifies he had a strong, clear, and certain perception of the Holy Spirit throughout its operations. Every true believer and faithful follower of Christ, in the apostolic age, received a portion of the same Holy Spirit which the prophets and apostles did; for saith Paul, "by one spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit."§ This one spirit rendered them one body, and joined them to the one living head. "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all,

* Galat. iii. 3. † Philip. iii. 3. ‡ John, vi. 63. § 1 Cor. xii. 13.

and *in you all*.”* Thus according to the several measures allotted them, they were all partakers of the same Holy Spirit, and as it was then, so it is now, and ever must be in the true spiritual universal church of Christ. This holy spirit of divine light, and power of life, is the great fundamental principle of Christianity, and the only true saving principle for all mankind. It is Christ in spirit, “a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and God’s salvation to the ends of the earth.”† No man can be a true Christian without the Spirit of Christ; for, “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” No man can be one of his sheep without a *distinguishing sense* of the Spirit of Christ. “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and *am known of mine*.” “My sheep *hear my voice*, and I know them and they follow me.” The sheep follow him, for they know his voice, and a stranger they will not follow.‡ The voice of Christ is the manifestation of his spirit to the soul.

If no man can be a true Christian without the Spirit of Christ, if no man can be one of his flock without a distinct knowledge of his voice, much less can any one be a minister of the gospel of Christ, which is the Power of God unto salvation, without an acquaintance with the operation of his spirit, and its clear manifestations, furnishing him with authority and qualification for this most important work in the Church. The apostolic direction is, “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”§ Such ministry is not the effect of man’s will or wisdom, but is the ministry of the Spirit; and all those who really are ministers of the gospel, have received a gift of the spirit for that purpose. “And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”|| No human talents or learning, no degrees in schools or universities, no ecclesiastical ordination can make a man a Gospel minister. Christ under the New Testament hath instituted a new ministry, not through any external call or ordination, but through the unction of his Spirit, and without any regard to a man’s outward condition in the world. In the first promulgation of the gospel, he chose fishermen, tent-makers and publicans, plain men and of ordinary employments in the

* Ephes. iv. 4, 5, 6. † Isaiah, xlix. 6. Acts, xiii. 47. ‡ John, x. 5. 14. 27. § 1 Peter, iv. 10, 11.

|| Ephes. iv. 11, 12.

world, and the gift of his spirit was their sufficient qualification for his ministry.

No one can be assured that he has this gift for the work of the ministry, but by the immediate impression and evidence of the Spirit itself. Nor can those among whom he labours, know that the gift has been bestowed, unless they also have the evidence of the same spirit. The Church of Christ was to be under his government, and built upon him, the only true foundation; consequently its members are not left to any uncertainty; and under the influence of their holy Head, they necessarily know when the ministry proceeds from his Spirit. Although it may be possible for men by the strength of human abilities learnedly and eloquently to descant on the doctrines and obligations of the gospel, yet without the heavenly, quickening virtue of the Spirit, such are only ministers of death,* and can never rise higher, unless they receive a gift for the work of the ministry. This gift is only at the disposal of him from whom all perfect gifts proceed, and not in the power of any man or set of men to assume or confer upon another. In a true Church, gathered together, not only into the belief of the doctrines, but also into the power and life of Christ, the spirit of God is the ruler and director in each individual, and in the whole collectively. When they assemble and wait upon God, he qualifies and sets apart for the ministry whom he pleases, whether rich or poor, servant or master, young or old, male or female, opening their mouths and giving them ability to exhort, reprove and instruct with virtue and power. As the gift of the Spirit is not confined to nation or sex, but is communicated to all, so the gift of the ministry is bestowed upon females as well as males. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."† If then we are, when baptized into Christ, all one in him, whether male or female, we all receive of his spirit, and the labours of those whom it may please him to put into the ministry will be to the edification of the body of Christ, which is his Church.

That females were to receive the gift of prophecy, is evident from this prediction "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy."‡ And the Apostle Peter, on the memorable day of Pentecost, quotes the passage, confirming the right of prophecy to the female sex. It is true that Paul, for the purpose of guarding the Church in

* 2 Cor. v. 5.

† Galat. iii. 26, 27, 28.

‡ Joel, ii. 28.

his time from unnecessary questions, and a consequent disturbance of the solemnity, enjoined that a woman should not be suffered to speak in it, but should inquire of her husband at home ; yet from the instructions he gave them respecting their manner when engaged in that work, it is plain he had no intention to forbid them the right to minister when they should be called thereunto. " But every woman that prayeth, or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head."* Philip, the evangelist, had four daughters who prophesied, and Paul speaks with approbation of others in the ministry of the gospel—" And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers whose names are written in the book of life."† The experience of many since that time, who have been edified by their gospel labours, has furnished every necessary assurance that the Head of the Church, in the dispensation of his gifts, has conferred that of the ministry on women as well as men, and that in the exercise of their gifts, they are to be respected and honoured for the work's sake.

It is an important duty in the Church, and which rests on those who have long stood firm in obedience to the Spirit of Christ, carefully to watch over the young and inexperienced ; and where any by mistaking their gift, improperly appear in this way, timely to counsel and caution them. Thus the living members are instrumental to preserve all in their proper places ; instructing one another in the opening of that light which makes manifest.

The gospel is the free gift of God. It cannot be purchased with money ; and what he dispenses freely, every true gospel minister, who is nothing more than a servant of Christ, is bound to give freely. In his instructions to the disciples, whom he was about to send out to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, he gave them this charge, " Freely ye have received, freely give."‡ And as they would be travelling among strangers without silver or gold in their purses, and, whilst immediately engaged in his work, they could not labour for a subsistence, he directs them, as a workman is considered to be worthy of his hire, to partake of the provision that should be voluntarily set before them. It was in his service they were employed, and the object was to benefit those to whom they were sent, and this was to be performed " without money and without price."§ It is the duty of the Church, to take care of the members who are poor and unable to provide for themselves, as well ministers as others. The disciples and apostles had all

* 1 Cor. xi. 5.

† Philip. iv. 3.

‡ Matt. x. 8.

§ Isaiah, lv. 1.

things in common. Paul, rather than make the gospel an expense to those to whom he preached, laboured with his own hands, and thus supplied his own wants, and the wants of those who were with him. When he was taking leave of the Elders of the Church, at Ephesus, having exhorted them to take heed to themselves and to the flock, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, he declared, "I have coveted no man's silver or gold, or apparel; yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that *so labouring* ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

The ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is, therefore, a holy, spiritual, baptizing ministry. It has its origin and existence in him who is the Head of the Body, the true Church, of which the ministers are necessarily members. Their qualification and call is derived from him, through the immediate impressions of his spirit on their understandings, and their preaching is "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth,"† upon which they must wait for instruction in every step they take in this solemn duty. It is a ministry that consists not "in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance."‡

ON PRAYER.

Perhaps there is scarcely an act sanctioned by the religion of Jesus Christ less understood, or more abused than prayer. True prayer, either mental or vocal, has its origin in the divine will. It is an entrance into and concurrence with the will of God, in petitioning for those things which he inclines his children to ask for. Hence it can only be performed as we are led thereto by his spirit, by which his will and our spiritual wants are made manifest. Those who think they are in the performance of this duty, by repeating the Lord's prayer, are too generally deficient. They do not consider that the very first sentence requires a qualification. Who are they that may call God Father? Certainly not those who are the servants of sin, who reject the light of Christ, and are enemies to his spirit; these are not his children. "But as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."§ Such may say "our Father which art in heaven;" but of the multitudes who are daily addressing him by that paternal title, there is reason to fear few, comparatively, are his obedient children

Acts, xx. 33, 34, 35. † 1 Cor. ii. 13. ‡ Thessalon. i. 5. § Rom. viii. 14.

and all others are saying that which is not true in relation to themselves. They have not lived in, nor received the "spirit of adoption," authorizing them to cry "Abba, Father." Neither are the disobedient willing that his kingdom should be set up in their hearts, nor that the divine will should be done; but they live in the pride and obstinacy of their own self-will. Instead of "forgiving men their trespasses," they watch the opportunity for revenge, and are joyful when they succeed in punishing those who they imagine have injured them. Others seem to suppose they shall be heard for their much speaking, and are therefore crowding together all the subjects of desire which the imagination can reach, and calling upon the Almighty to grant this assemblage of requests. This kind of devotion was practised by the Pharisees; but what were the remarks which the Saviour of men made upon them? "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men; verily I say unto you, they have their reward."* Having shown the motives of these supplicants, and noticed that a primary object with them was to be seen of men, he gives his disciples an instructive lesson on the subject; a lesson which ought to be deeply pondered by all who think themselves called to vocal prayer in the assemblies of the people, as well as by those who in their closets attempt to address the Almighty. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."† These cautions are sufficient to prove that though our Lord has invited to prayer, yet he requires that those who pray should know that the motive is pure, that it is free from all creaturely passion and affection, and therefore he has said for the encouragement of such—"Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."‡ "And whatsoever ye shall ask in *my name*, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."§ His name is his divine power, and whatever is asked for under his holy influence, which is at times experienced by the soul to be "as ointment poured forth," he will unquestionably grant. This is not praying in the will of the creature, but in the will of God, and must be an acceptable act. The natural man, with all his studied forms of prayer, is ignorant of the spirit; and therefore knows not what to ask for, but is in darkness and spiritual death,

* Matt. vi. 5. † Matt. vi. 8. ‡ Matt. vii. 7. § John, xiv. 13.

and never can pray acceptably, until he is brought under the redeeming power of truth, and made subject to the cross of Christ; having the old and fallen nature humbled by the righteous judgment of God upon it. In this state, the soul is sensible of its need of daily bread, and there is begotten in it a true hunger and thirst after righteousness; the spiritual feelings are quickened and made alive unto God, and the temptations of the enemy are resisted. In this conflict, the weight of human infirmities is felt, and prayers are always alive in the soul; hence it may be said of such, agreeably with the exhortation of the apostle Paul, that they "pray without ceasing." Now this living travail for redemption from under the power of darkness, and dominion of sin, is not superficial or outward; but it is a work known in the presence of God, and his gracious ear is always opened to the groanings and prayers of those who endure it; because they breathe in his own divine spirit, and live to him and not to themselves.

When an assembly are gathered for the purpose of divine worship, and any believe they are called to vocal prayer, and are therein guided by the Spirit of God, many present being brought into the divine will, the prayer itself will be owned, and united with by such, as being from the dictates of the spirit; but if the person speaking do not keep to the leadings of the spirit, then what is said is not true prayer, and will not be accepted. In a religious assembly there may be different states and growths, and each may be gathered into the divine will, but owing to their various wants, they may not be led to unite in one petition, though all may be engaged in spiritual prayer. In this view of prayer, silence must appear really important and adapted to the purposes of true and acceptable worship. That prayer can only be opened in the understanding by the divine spirit, there are many passages in the Scriptures to prove. "Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the spirit; because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."* Again the same apostle saith, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also."† If the believers then knew not what to pray for as they ought, but required the help and intercession of the spirit, as the medium through which we have access to the Father, continues to be the same, so the aid of the spirit must be no less indispensable now to

* Rom. viii. 26, 27.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

enable us to offer acceptable prayer than it was in that age of the church.

In further proof of the spiritual nature of true prayer, we will recite the sentiments of several persons of note. Gell says, "words conceived only in an earthly mind, and uttered out of the memory by man's voice, which make a noise in the ears of flesh and blood, are not, nor can be accounted prayer before our Father which is in heaven." Smallbridge, Bishop of Bristol, has the following expressions: "Devotion of mind is itself a silent prayer, which wants not to be clothed in words, that God may better know our desires. He regards not the service of our lips, but the inward disposition of our hearts." Monro speaks to the same effect—"I am persuaded," says he, "that it would be vastly advantageous for youth, if care were taken to train them up to this method of prayer; that is, if they were taught frequently to place themselves in the Divine presence, and there silently to adore their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. For thereby they would become habitually recollected. Devotion would be their element, and they would know by experience what our blessed Saviour, and his great apostle mean, when they enjoin us to pray without ceasing. It was I suppose by some such method of devotion as I am now speaking of that Enoch walked with God, that Moses saw Him that is invisible; that the royal Psalmist set the Lord always before him; and that our Lord Jesus himself, continued whole nights in prayer to God. No man, I believe, will imagine, that his prayer, during all the space in which it is said to have continued, was altogether vocal. When he was in his agony in the garden, he used but few words. His vocal prayer then consisted only of one petition, and an act of pure resignation, thrice repeated. But I hope all will allow, that his devotion lasted longer than while he was employed in uttering a few sentences." True prayer, therefore, being purely of divine origin, and only brought forth in man by the immediate openings and leadings of the Spirit of God, all who enter upon it without such direction and government, are only fulfilling the will of the creature, and though they may repeat the best of words, even the prayer which Christ taught his disciples, it is not prayer to them, nor can it be expected to enter the ears of the Most High.

As no human acquirements can qualify for prayer, or in any degree be adequate to its right performance, so also it may be said with respect to singing of hymns and spiritual songs. That singing which is pleasing to the Almighty, must proceed from that which is pure, even from the divine life and

manifestation of grace in the heart; and all those who are born of the spirit will no doubt as they are moved thereby, have spiritual songs and hymns to return unto the Lord. But songs of thanksgiving and praise are not always necessarily vocal, neither can they stand in need of any musical tone to render them acceptable unto God. "Be filled with the spirit," says the apostle, "speaking to *yourselves* in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody *in your heart to the Lord.*"* It could seldom occur that the whole congregation would be raised into the same spiritual song, and if any should outwardly sing that, which was not brought forth in them by the spirit of God, they would be acting contrary to truth, and instead of being edified thereby, might become the instruments of spiritual death to those to whom the Lord has not given a song, and who according to his righteousness are yet to pass under the just dispensation of condemnation. The rebellious and the enemies of truth, are not prepared to join in the true spiritual worship whilst they remain in that state, but they may unite their voices where an outward form is embraced, and even suppose they are doing God service.

As the worship which the followers of Christ are called unto is of divine original, there is no mistake in its operations; but all the living may harmonize together in the same spirit, and worship God "according as he has dealt to every man the measure of faith."† Every one being gathered to the gift of grace in themselves, without depending upon any man to assist them in the performance of this duty, there is room for the exercise of their respective gifts. Such as the spirit sets apart for these services may engage in preaching, praying or singing, as they are led thereunto by the same spirit; and when none are thus publicly led, petitions or thanksgivings, according to the different wants or growths in the assembly, may silently ascend and meet with acceptance before the throne of grace; in either case will divine worship be performed, and the body and members of Christ edified. This worship is not dependent upon the wisdom of man, and needs not the pomp, riches, or splendour of this world to adorn and support it. It is such as proceedeth from the spirit of God, and is always accompanied with its influence, being begun by its motion, and carried on by its power and strength. It is a worship perfectly consistent with the spirituality of the gospel dispensation, a dispensation in which the substance is to be enjoyed in the spirit and life of the dear Son of God, who is building up a spiritual church founded upon him in all things

* Ephes. v. 18, 19.

† Rom. xii. 3.

ABIGAIL BLENNING.



Godliness with contentment is great gain.—1 TIM. vi. 6.



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ABIGAIL BLENNING.

ABIGAIL BLENNING was the daughter of Nathaniel and Angela Bailey, of Paulton, in Somersetshire; persons in humble station, but alive to the importance of the "one thing needful," and anxiously concerned for the best welfare of their children; training them up in habits of industry, and with a strict adherence to truth in their words, and to justice and uprightness in all their dealings and conduct; instructing them especially, in the great duties of regularly attending public worship, of reading the Holy Scriptures, and of seeking ability to keep the divine commandments.

In very early life the sentiment was fixed in Abigail's mind, that temporal things are of small importance, when compared with those which are eternal: the thought of eternity was often present with her; and when her little companions were expressing their various wishes, she found (to use her own words) nothing good enough for her to wish, but heaven. Often kneeling down in some lonely place she would in her simplicity, say, "I am a poor little child; make me Thy child, and take me to heaven when I die."

As she grew up, being handsome, lively, and agreeable, she became vain of the admiration of her acquaintances, and though often secretly condemned for such folly, she delighted in dressing and adorning herself, and setting the fashion to her young friends: nor was it till after a long-continued struggle with this temptation that she adopted, some years subsequently, a very simple garb, which accorded with the convictions of her conscience.

After some disappointment with regard to marriage, in which she felt herself to blame, and always thought that her *own* caprice had prevented her having a suitable partner, in her 20th year she married a young man, then supposed to be a serious, respectable character. For a few months she imagined herself to have reached the height of human happiness, when she discovered, with an agony of feeling never erased from her recollection, that her husband had been guilty of gross misconduct, under circumstances of rather peculiar aggravation. The anguish of her mind threatened the loss of her reason, but her confidence in God did not forsake her at this most trying moment. Falling on the ground, she fervently prayed that her senses might not be taken away, and cried aloud, "What shall I do? what shall I do?" The gentle language was uttered in her heart, "Forgive!" which healing words soothed her agitated mind, and she had the firmness ever after to appear calm and quiet, and to maintain towards her faithless husband an even temper and

kind behaviour, assisting him diligently in his trade, though she too well knew that others shared in the profits, and endeavouring by every means to regain his affection : but he would rudely repulse all her efforts to soothe and please him.

Abigail Blenning had long been a member of the Methodists' Society—she diligently attended their meetings in all weathers, and under every discouragement. On one of these occasions she was particularly affected with the consideration of the love of Christ to sinful man, and with her own insensibility, saying mentally, with many tears, "Thou hast such a Saviour, and thou canst not love him," when the same heavenly voice which had been often heard in her heart, assured her, that her feeble efforts to love, and sincere desires were accepted, that the spotless robe should be given her to wear ; and these words occurred to her recollection, "At death's approach I will be near." Comforted and encouraged she went her way—her heart was glad, and all her worldly cares seemed light and easy to be borne. After thirty years of cruel neglect, her husband wholly abandoned her, and for six years before his decease, she scarcely saw him. But when he was laid upon the bed of death, the Christian meekness and tender-heartedness which she had been enabled, by Divine grace, so signally to maintain, were again manifested. She visited him, earnestly exhorting him to seek for repentance and for mercy ; assuring him at the same time, of her own hearty forgiveness ; and the signs of penitence evinced by this long hardened transgressor, induced her to hope, that he was favoured with real repentance. A. B. had also, the opportunity of returning good for evil to his wretched companion, whom she compassionately visited and supplied with necessaries during her last illness.

She was brought into great poverty after her husband's death, and was compelled to share a miserable kitchen, or rather cellar, with another poor woman, depending chiefly for subsistence upon fragments given her by a family who had long highly esteemed her. Yet at this time she was so richly comforted with the consolations of religion, that her dry morsel and hard fare were sweetened, and she envied the condition of no one. On one occasion, seeing a person in great need, Abigail gave her one of the two shillings, which at that time constituted all the money that she possessed ; and it might appear as if this generous action were recompensed, as shortly afterwards, without any solicitations of her own, a place in Clement's alms-houses was procured for her, where the inmates receive the liberal sum of 10s. (£2, 25s.) weekly, coals medical attendance, and a woman to wait on or nurse them. She had now money and leisure in larger measure than she had ventured to expect ; and she felt truly desirous that these gifts of a

kind Providence might be used aright. She was able to work a little, and thus added to her means of relieving others, which she did to an almost incredible extent, seldom suffering any very destitute person to go from her without a little aid. She regularly sent half-a-crown a-week, and most of her earnings, to her widowed daughter; she allowed 3d. per week to one poor woman, and contributed constantly to several benevolent and religious objects. A. B. had a remarkable knowledge of the Scriptures, with a good memory; and she was often enabled to speak a word in season to others, gathered from some portion of the Sacred Volume. She sometimes feelingly repeated the passage, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." She urged the duty of daily watchfulness and self-denial, enforcing it with the command, "Mortify your members which are upon earth." On parting with a friend she said, "She loves our Saviour, but he has many things to teach her. 'I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.'" And often, in exhorting her Christian friends to maintain a consistent conduct and conversation, she would say, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so *walk* ye in him." To a member of the Society of Friends, who appeared to her likely to suffer from her fondness for dress, she wrote, advising her to wear more plain attire, saying, "It is the little foxes—these *little things*, which spoil the tender grape." She proved in many instances her own love of justice; once even taking a long journey to prevent an unjust will being made in her favour; an action which yielded her particular comfort in the retrospect; indeed, in her earnest concern to do the will of her heavenly Father, she realized in a very consoling degree the assurance, "Whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord."

The duty of forbearing and forgiving was deeply impressed on the mind of this pious woman, and was carried into practice on other occasions besides the very trying one to which allusion has been already made; and in remembering those days; when enabled to forgive her husband's ill-treatment, she used to say, that she was borne above all; she felt no fear or discouragement, even in the most difficult, and sometimes dangerous circumstances; a verse of a favourite hymn being often adopted by her with triumphant joy, as expressing her own feelings—

The sword, the pestilence, the fire,
Shall but fulfil my best desire;
From sin and sorrow set me free,
And bring thy servant home to thee.

About the 80th year of her age, A. B. began regularly to attend

the week-day meetings of the Friends at Westminster, which she continued, as long as bodily ability permitted her to do so. It was evident that she prized these opportunities, and that they were profitable to her. When near her close, she said, "I can breathe to the Lord, though a prisoner on my bed. I used to like the silent meetings—solemn—solemn." Individuals who had no knowledge of her character, have been struck with her deportment on these occasions, remarkably expressive of love and devotion—as if she could experimentally adopt the language, "It is good for me to draw nigh unto God." She doubtless proved for herself, that the believer in Jesus Christ may silently worship the Father of spirits through Him, and rejoice in the consolations of his love.

Abigail's concern for the good of others was not lost in the infirmities of age; she was fervent in spirit; and was remarkably enabled to apply passages of Scripture with great simplicity and pertinence to persons who came in her way—more than a few of these can remember words thus fitly spoken to them as having ministered to their reproof or encouragement. She also frequently wrote short letters, expressive of sympathy and counsel to individuals in different stations; sometimes to those whom she had never seen, nor did the signature of the lowly writer prevent their being accepted as seasonable and instructive. The following may be taken as a specimen of this pious woman's care to warn others to avoid all appearance of evil. Having listened to a person preaching in Covent Garden, when the rude conduct of some persons present seemed to irritate him, and induced him to speak sharply to the people, Abigail sent the following note:—

Hon. Sir,

I stood near you, in Covent Garden, and was sorry to see you show anger; "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

A. BLENNING.

A young woman was one day complaining to A. B. of the time taken up in attention to outward affairs, and the providing for temporal wants; she bid her not lament on that account, as occupation was of real advantage both to body and soul. Even in Paradise it was ordained, that Adam should not be without employment but he was placed in the Garden of Eden to dress and to keep it. At another time, seeing the same individual under much depression she sweetly endeavoured to console her, adding part of the text, "The God of all grace; who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

At the age of eighty-four she met with a serious accident, being

thrown down by a gig, in crossing a street. After some weeks of great suffering, she recovered, expressing herself to have been graciously supported both at the time and throughout her consequent confinement to her bed, by the "everlasting arm" being "underneath."

Another fall soon after occasioned much pain and a long confinement to her room; but she was cheerful and sweet; and the subject of her frequent meditation was these words, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first"—this was spoken with a feeling of holy rapture and triumph.

A. Blenning was now evidently sinking, and losing her memory; yet she continued fervent in spirit, diligent in attending public worship, and often appeared desirous, as she expressed it, that the Lord would make her ready and take her to himself. One of her friends; upon calling to see her, was much struck with her altered appearance, but comforted to hear her express cheerful hope and quiet resignation to the will of the Lord. "I am in his gracious hands," she said, adding that the words were often in her remembrance, in the 16th chapter of John, respecting the Comforter, especially these words, "He shall take of mine and show it unto you," saying, "*He has taken—he has showed—he has showed me that Jesus has suffered for me—was wounded for me.*" The visitor having reason to conclude that Abigail was not well waited upon, and that some of her irreligious neighbors were extremely uncivil to her, asked her if she was kindly nursed by those around her—she replied, "If I am not it is all the better." She appeared to be strengthened to bear all with patience, in remembrance of Him who had been mocked, buffeted, and spit upon. She continued to hold fast the beginning of her confidence, and spoke of feeling such love to her Saviour as she could not express. Hearing that passage mentioned, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things, which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do," she said, "Ah! so we are—unprofitable, even the best of us all." She always felt a godly jealousy, lest any should trust in any measure to themselves—their own deeds of charity, and their moral virtues for salvation.

One of her friends expressing a hope that her senses might be preserved, so as that she might render her dying testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, and praise him with her dying breath, she seemed to have no wish herself regarding it, but repeated, "I am in his gracious hands, let him do as he pleaseth with me." Her mind frequently dwelt on the account of Belshazzar alarmed by

the hand-writing on the wall. "What could his thousand lords do for him then? what could ten thousand worlds do for me now?"

We have now arrived at the period when the aged subject of this brief memoir was so weak as scarcely to be able to sit up in her bed, and her mind often wandered; yet she said she could breathe to the Lord, though a prisoner on her bed. At another time she spoke of its being a hard battle with the temptation of Satan, and hard to hold fast her confidence, to hold fast her hope of mercy. She said, "I cry day and night unto Him" (the Lord.) At another time, her remembrance being desired, she repeated the encouraging words, "Look unto me, and be ye saved"—"I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." A person remarking how hard it is to forgive injuries heartily, A. B. said, "If you find it so, *tell Him*—tell Him you do—tell Him all that is in your heart, and ask for strength to bear and forgive. Ask for the charity that "suffereth long, and is kind; vaunteth not itself, doth not behave itself unseemly." Think of Jesus, who was wounded, smitten, and despised; who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." Being asked how she did, and if she had any appetite, she said, "*I feed on Him*; that is the best food."

A. Blenning continued to decline in strength, and to lose recollection, though she still knew her most intimate friend; and being asked by her, how she felt, said her mind was kept in a state of great resignation, her breathing of soul being continually, "Thy will be done; Thy kingdom come;" that she felt as a child asking of a father.

Some of her friends called to see her, to one of whom she said, "Set your affections on things above; it will soon be over here! I am happy—I am in death—happy in death—this is more than having ten thousand worlds." She wished to hear read to her the 5th of Matthew and the 6th of John—she might be said thoroughly to love the Holy Scriptures. She remarked that her memory was fast going, and her thoughts were bewildered, but happy. She could instantly recollect herself when any subject of religious interest was referred to. On seeing one of her friends, she said, "'All things work together for good'—humbling providences are good. I want humbling, and the Lord is kind, and he sends me humbling providences. I feel that I love Him; he has first loved me. How I mourned once, that I could not love him who had suffered and died for me; He told me in my heart I could love him; that was the word he spoke in my heart."

Falling into a state of stupor, when aroused, she expressed feel-

ings of peace, and of quietly awaiting the end. Parting with a young woman who had kindly waited on her, she cheerfully repeated, whilst the coldness of death was upon her—

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

She sweetly sank away soon after, without apparent suffering, and a lovely expression of serenity rested on her countenance after death. She died on the 26th of the 10th mo., 1834, aged 87 years.

In the life of Abigail Blenning, we witness an instance of the fulfilment of the precept and promise, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." May the example be encouraging to parents; and may this brief narrative animate all who read it, to seek after "durable riches and righteousness," that, whatever be our station in respect to worldly circumstances, our experience may be, "that the life we now live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us;" then shall we be strengthened to bear injuries and unkindness with mildness and patience, not rendering evil for evil, but forbearing and forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us, and to sustain with cheerful fortitude, poverty, pain, and affliction, viewing the approach of death without dismay, trusting in Him who hath promised to be with his people; for he hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" and thus shall we know for ourselves, that "Godliness with contentment is great gain—having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

THE END.

"WHAT SHALL WE DO

TO BE

SAVED?"



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“WHAT SHALL WE DO

TO BE

SAVED ?”

NO person who seriously believes in the existence of a God, in a future state, and in the awful doctrine of rewards and punishments, can be indifferent respecting what may be his lot when he shall be dispossessed of this frail tabernacle of clay which he now inhabits, and which is approaching the period of its dissolution. It cannot be a matter of indifference to him, whether he shall finally receive the irrevocable sentence of Go, ye cursed, into the regions of irremediable misery ; or Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for the righteous ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. This concern has prompted many to inquire what is essentially necessary for them to believe and practise, in order to render themselves proper objects of divine complacency, and to furnish them with a well-grounded hope of a glorious and happy immortality. Many of the honest and sincere of every nation under heaven, have formed different ideas of the requisites for salvation ; and, of course, have pursued different measures to accomplish that desirable end. It is not my present business to particularize any of those various systems of faith which are adopted by different sects among mankind. It is not to controvert matters, in which sincere men of the various denominations most surely believe ; but rather to recommend them always to stand open to conviction, and to adhere with strict attention to the measure of light which they have received. I shall therefore address myself to those, in whatever religious society they are found, whose honest inquiries have not yet been attended with sufficient conviction ; have not led them clearly to perceive what are the terms on which their future happiness depends ; and are therefore looking one upon another, whilst this important question is found, at least, in their hearts, if not in their mouths, “ Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved ?”

I shall not presume arrogantly to dictate to any respecting matters of so important a concern as that of the salvation of the soul : every man should exercise those talents with which the Father of Lights has endowed him, in a close and sincere

attention to the voice of the internal teacher ; and in the discovery of those truths, which have an immediate relation to the happiness of a being, circumstanced as he is. I shall simply propose those things, which, from my own experience as an individual, appear to me worthy of God for their author ; and worthy of man's most serious attention. It is an indisputable truth that we made not ourselves ; we may safely join in the prophet's appeal to God, " We are thine offspring, *Thou* hast made us, and not we ourselves." The matter which forms the universe, the vehicles which the soul informs, and the intellectual powers and faculties we possess, derive their being from the eternal fountain of all power and intelligence, whom we characterize by the awful names of Jehovah and God.

It is also clear to me, that we were brought into existence with the benevolent design of finally sustaining the confluent dignities of glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life. The Lord Almighty hath in unspeakable mercy designed, that after we have endured a season of probation on earth, a conflict with our passions excited by various causes, and a fight of afflictions, we should finally receive a glorious reward ; a perpetuity of unmixed felicity, in the unknown regions of eternity. But this desirable end is not to be effected by what is generally called Fate, the laws of necessity, or the arbitrary will and power of the Author of our existence. God has constituted us free and intelligent beings, and endued us with faculties capable of apprehending and practising those duties, which he makes the conditions of our final acceptance with him. He offers happiness to his creatures ; but does not impose it on them. He shews us the spiritual Canaan ; he gives us power to possess it, but does not compel us to enter into it. Good and evil are clearly set before us, but our election is not constrained to either. The Sovereign of the universe is no respecter of persons ; for " of one blood he made all nations that dwell on the face of the earth ;" they stand in the same relation to the universal Father, Shepherd, and Bishop of souls, who tenderly invites the whole race of mankind to inherit the joy of his salvation. To this doctrine, the holy apostle bears an ample and explicit testimony ; " Of a truth," said he, " I perceive that God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

" If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die : but if ye, through the spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

This is a proposition that relates to every individual in the vast community of mankind, however circumstanced : whether bond or free, or in whatever climate he resides. All this indeed may be acknowledged by those, who yet are in doubt what

they shall do to be saved with an everlasting salvation. They want to be informed of the precise ideas that should be affixed to the conditions contained in the text, though perhaps they readily apprehend that the terms life and death imply future happiness and misery. I shall therefore attempt to give my thoughts on the important subject. To "live after the flesh," is to live in the gratification of our animal appetites and passions, beyond the bounds of reason, temperance, and sobriety: which as it frequently introduces numerous disorders into the animal system, and aggravates those infirmities to which these corruptible bodies are incident; so it affects the good of society, and renders us unfit for those contemplations, and that felicity, which are adapted to the dignity of rational and immortal spirits; beings, whom God in his wisdom has made a little (and perhaps but a little) lower than the angels, and would crown with a glory, honour, and happiness, far superior to that which animal gratifications can confer on their deluded votaries. Whilst we are in the body, we must expect to find those appetites, and affections, which belong to our nature: but these are to be restrained within the bounds of virtue, and attended to in proportion to our necessities; of which the divine principle that God has graciously implanted in our hearts should be the judge.

This divine principle, although called by a variety of names, is invariably the same in all mankind. "It is the manifestation of the Spirit, which is given to every man to profit withal." "It is the light that lighteth every man, that cometh into the world." "It is the word of God, that is quick and powerful." "It is the word of faith, in the mouth and in the heart," which the apostle preached to the Gentiles. Finally, it is "the grace of God that bringeth salvation, and hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ"—and happy are those who hear and obey it in all things.

I would not be understood to mean, that this principle is designed to instruct us in all those truths which the human mind may attempt to investigate; or to give a clear insight into those numerous, speculative subjects, which have not only unprofitably employed mankind, and diverted their attention from more substantial objects, but which have perplexed and divided them from generation to generation: but by attention to it, we may apprehend those truths that belong to our everlasting peace, and have an essential relation to the important end of our existence, and be enabled, through obedience to its divine requisitions, to

experience our salvation perfected by him who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Various are our obligations and duties, religious, relative and social ; arising from our various connections, natural and divine. The relation we stand in to the Author of our being is, that of children ; filial fear, obedience and worship, are therefore our indispensable duties to him, throughout our whole lives in our conduct at all times. The relation we stand in to our fellow creatures is that of brethren ; children of the same universal Father, and formed for the same glorious and happy end. Justice, charity, and brotherly kindness are therefore our indispensable obligations to mankind. There are also various accidental relations, such as father, governor, master, servant, and numerous others, all which have their correspondent duties. Thus far, perhaps, the persons whom I address may concur with me in sentiment ; but they, as well as I, are perhaps conscious of having failed, in numerous instances, to discharge their religious duties to God, and their social duties to mankind. " We have all sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God : " we have multiplied our transgressions without number, and our iniquities rise before us as a thick cloud, which obscures the brightness of that eternal sun of righteousness, that would otherwise illuminate our understandings with its marvellous light. " Who," therefore, says the illuminated penitent soul, " shall deliver us from the body of this death : " who shall take from us the weight of our sins under which we groan : who shall save us from the wrath to come ? " Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved ? "

The conditions of our reconciliation and redemption are very clearly expressed in the oracles of sacred truth ; the pliability of the divine nature is repeatedly asserted ; he is represented to us in the adorable character of a God of mercy, long suffering, and of unspeakable kindness ; as a Being ready to blot out our transgressions from the celestial register on our sincere repentance, and to remember them no more. This important and interesting doctrine was testified under the law, spoken of by the prophets, and gloriously confirmed by the Son of God, who is our mediator with the Father, and the hope of our future glory. In his character was displayed to mankind, in the most eminent and striking manner, the provident care, mercy, and goodness of God toward the whole rational creation ; who, like sheep, have gone astray from the universal Shepherd and Bishop of souls, and have widely wandered from the paths of purity and holiness, which are ways of pleasantness and peace. That path of the just man, which (like the luminous orb as it arises in our hemisphere) shines with increasing brightness, till it ar

rives at the meridian altitude of a glorious, perfect day ; leads all those who pursue its direction by degrees of experience, through the wilderness of this world to the grand and ultimate end of our creation ; to that complete fruition of bliss, which is represented to us by a " city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker God is ;" a city " whose walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise ;" a city that hath no need of the light of sun, moon, and stars, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof ; a city where God reigns triumphantly among his saints, and is to them an inexhaustible fountain of light and felicity : there the weary pilgrim finds an end to all his anxiety and labour, and receives the reward of his faith, the fruition of his hope, even the salvation of his soul.

The important message which Christ had in commission from his Father, was, that he compassionated his creatures encompassed with the distresses which their sins had brought upon them ; that he willed not their everlasting separation from him, the source of happiness ; but that they should be reconciled to him : he therefore calls upon them to " repent and be converted," that their sins might be forgiven them. " Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This was the interesting doctrine which the Saviour of man promulgated ; and happy are those who hear and obey it. It is not the assent of the lip and of the tongue to the glorious truths of the gospel, but a surrender of the will and affections, a renovation of heart, and conformity to the divine image, which can prepare us for admission into the new Jerusalem, the city of God.

If we take an impartial survey of our past lives, review our frequent revoltings, and compare our conduct with the convictions we have often received of right and wrong, virtue and vice ; there is scarcely a soul but must feel some degree of remorse, some degree of repentance, for the turpitude of his morals and his want of love, obedience and gratitude, to so gracious a Father, who has encompassed us with blessings by his providence, from the earliest period of our lives to the present hour. We must, I say again, upon serious retrospection, experience some degree of repentance ; but unhappily for us, these profitable impressions are frequently not durable, they are too soon erased by a variety of creaturely objects, and pass away like the early dew. Those who have been cleansed in some degree by the water of contrition, are often defiled again by a repetition of that iniquity, which, in the moments of their humiliation, they had determined to renounce and forsake ; they are again caught in the snares of their lusts, and captivated by those

objects which have a tendency to alienate their affections from the supreme Good. Thus, when the force of conviction again sounds the awakening alarm, they are ready to query, with surprise and anxiety, what is to be done in this afflictive dilemma, to which our inconstancy to virtuous resolutions has reduced us? Shall we despair of that divine mercy we have so often abused; of that goodness we have so long trifled with? God forbid! rather prostrate your souls at the throne of grace, and humbly implore the continued mercy of the universal Parent. "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." Beseech him therefore to send forth help from his holy sanctuary; that you may be strengthened to renew and keep your covenants with him; refrain from the commission of evil, and wait on him in the silence of all flesh. That since it hath pleased him again to enlighten your darkness, and thus to give you to see yourselves as you are seen of him, he may also be pleased to purify your hearts with that celestial fire which purgeth away the intellectual filth and dross, that prevents the ascent of the soul towards God, and renders it an unfit habitation for his holiness to dwell in. As our backslidings have frequently corrected us, and covered our minds with anxiety, let our future conduct, directed by his grace, manifest the sincerity of our repentance; and, by a conversation ordered aright, let us glorify our Father who is in heaven.

I feel the influence of the love of God in Christ Jesus, which extends to the whole rational creation, and seeks the salvation of every soul that inhabits the earth; in which I entreat you, as a being subject to the same infirmities that you sometimes unavailingly deplore, "repent and be converted." Repentance you have frequently experienced; but too little, I fear, of that essential conversion which the gospel of Christ proposes. It is highly probable that many have seen the necessity of that renovation of heart and reformation of manners, produced by conversion; yet, urged by the powerful prevalence of their lusts, they would, if possible, find some other remedy for a wounded conscience, than that which the simplicity of the gospel requires, as a necessary prelude to the favour of God. Like the rich young man in the gospel, they have been animated with a desire to be enrolled among the disciples of the Lord Jesus; and thus become partakers of that inheritance which is incorruptible and full of glory. They have asked counsel of him, the wonderful Counsellor; addressing him with this important question, "What good thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" Yet when the unchangeable terms of salvation have been proposed; when they have been told that they must part with all their idols, they have gone away sorrowful: the terms have appeared too hard

for them to comply with, and like the Assyrian that sought to be cured of his leprosy, are crying out, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean?" Thus, numbers among mankind are striving to elude those measures which the gospel of Christ enjoins; and are substituting others in their stead, which are better adapted to sooth the carnal mind, and prevent that mortification of the deeds of the body, which human nature shrinks from.

Man is desirous to possess the crown of eternal life, but not to bear the cross; he would indeed reign with Christ, but not suffer with him; he would accompany him to the Mount of Transfiguration, but not to Golgotha; he would be his attendant at his glorification, but not in the awful scenes of his humiliation. Divers have wandered as from mountain to mountain, and from hill to hill, seeking for the living in the sepulchres of the dead; they have sometimes adopted one creed and sometimes another, practised external ordinances and complied with empty forms, addressing themselves frequently to guides, as blind and impotent as themselves, with this important inquiry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" I say again, "Repent and be converted;" for this is the only way to find salvation to your souls. No external ceremonies, no verbal confessions, nor any change of opinions merely, can accomplish this repentance and conversion, and afford you the consequent reward of a glorious immortality. This important work of salvation must be effected in man by the powerful operation of the Holy Ghost; which is as a consuming fire to the adverse part in man, to the corrupt and perverse will, which would not that Christ should reign in his kingdom, and that God should be all in all. It is the baptism of fire, of which John's was but a type, which discriminating the pure from the impure, gathers the wheat into the garner, but consumes the chaff with unquenchable burnings.

In the world, there are many voices which correspond not with the voice of Christ, the only true Shepherd (whom we ought to hear and obey in all things,) but are the voices of those who have found it for their worldly interest to lead people from, rather than to Christ, the glorious high priest of the Christian religion; they have attempted to render that mysterious, which the Holy Ghost hath left plain; and to perplex the understandings of mankind with vain metaphysical speculations, without making them either wiser or better. These men have indeed proved physicians of no real value: instead of laying the axe to the root of the corrupt tree, they have only attempted to lop off some of its branches; they have prescribed emollients

where the most searching operations were necessary : and thus, healing the wound of the daughter of Zion deceitfully, they have lulled multitudes into a fatal security, flattering them with hopes which must finally end in disappointment. There are others who assume the office of ministers, the purity of whose intentions my charity will not permit me to dispute ; who, like a man that attempts to answer a question before he has fully heard it, have too precipitately embarked in the important work of instructing souls relative to the affairs of salvation. These are like Ephraim, “ a cake not turned ;” are not yet instructed in the way of the Lord perfectly ; and whilst they are teaching others, had need themselves to be taught what are “ the first principles of the oracles of God.” They have run on the Lord’s errand unsent, and therefore have not essentially profited the people. They have taken upon them to guide those that are inquiring what they shall do to be saved, and have led them indeed from the confines of Egypt ; but leave them (undirected to the spiritual Moses) to wander in uncertainty, and to compass a mountain of doubts in the wilderness. May the Lord Almighty, in his mercy, gather those who are wandering as sheep without a shepherd, and lead them into the sacred enclosure of his fold, into eternal safety.

I cannot direct the searcher after truth, who is pensively inquiring what he shall do to be saved, to the ministry of any man ; but would rather recommend him to the immediate teaching of the word nigh in the heart, even the Spirit of God. This is the only infallible teacher, and primary adequate rule of faith and practice : it will lead those who attend to its dictates into the peaceable paths of safety and of truth. “ Ye need not,” said the apostle to the church formerly, “ that any man teach you, save as this anointing teacheth, which is truth and no lie : cease therefore from man, whose breath is in his nostrils,” and whose existence is but a vapour : for wherein is he to be accounted of ? As a fallible being he is liable to frequent deceptions, and therefore liable to deceive ; whereas the Spirit of God cannot be deceived, neither will it deceive any soul that yields itself to its government, and obeys its dictates. Oh, ye penitent prodigals, my soul earnestly longs for your restoration to the mercy and favour of God : ye who are reduced, by your wanderings in the wilderness of this world, to a state of extreme poverty ; to the want of that bread that comes down from Heaven, which alone can nourish the soul up to eternal life. Ye who are attempting to satisfy the cravings of an immortal spirit, with the spiritless husks and shells of an empty profession of religion ; look towards your Father from whom you have revolted : remember that in his house there is bread enough and to spare ; there your

souls may be replenished with ever-enduring substance. Return, O house of Israel ! seek the face of your everlasting Friend and Father ; he has, in unspeakable kindness, declared, that he will be found of those who seek him in sincerity of heart ; and that as many as knock at the gate of mercy, shall be admitted to his presence, and receive the remission of their sins. The humble address which the prodigal made to his father, in that excellent parable given us by our Lord himself, the father's reply to it, and the manner of the son's reception into favour, are exceedingly expressive of the becoming penitence of the one, and the mercy of the other. " I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son ; make me as one of thy hired servants." The injured parent compassionates his distress, takes the prodigal in his arms, owns him for his son, orders the fatted calf to be killed, and rebukes the envy of his elder brother with " This my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found." O the height and depth of the goodness and mercy of God ! " Look unto him all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved."

Before I conclude, I find it in my heart to address another class : a class which has earnestly sought, and happily found, *Him*, of whom " Moses and the prophets did write," Jesus of Nazareth, the Emmanuel ; which being interpreted, is, " God with us." Ye who once were scattered as sheep without a shepherd, " on the barren mountains and desolate hills of an empty profession ;" but now the great Shepherd hath gathered you within the sacred enclosure of his sheepfold, and you are under the peculiar protection of the Lord Almighty. You hath he plucked as brands out of the burning, and redeemed to himself with the saving strength of his right arm ; may you ever remember his unutterable mercy, and dedicate the remaining moments of life to the honour of his name. My soul salutes you in the endeared affection of the gospel of peace, and wishes your establishment in righteousness ; that you may abide in holy patience the fiery trial of your faith, throughout the days of your pilgrimage on earth ; and become as fixed pillars in the celestial building, the house of God, that shall no more go out.

If ye abide in the word of faith by which ye have been taught, neither the malice of men nor devils, nor all the united powers of darkness, shall be able to pluck you out of the hand of Him who is your Judge, your King, your Protector, your Father, and your everlasting Friend. When the heavens shall be wrapped together like a scroll ; when the sun and moon shall be darkened ; when every constellation of the heavens shall sink into everlasting obscurity, and the elements of this world shall melt with fervent heat ; you will possess a habitation within the superior regions

of a new heaven and a new earth, where the Lord your righteousness dwells.

Many of the pretended wise, learned, and prudent, who have sought to climb up some other way, rather than to enter by Christ, who is the door (by the conditions which he has proposed) into the sheepfold, may pity you as fools, or ridicule you as enthusiasts; count your lives madness, and your end to be without honour; but they will one day be astonished, when they may see, to their confusion, that such only as comply with his terms, are finally numbered among the children of God, and that the lot of their inheritance is among the saints. In the world, you are to expect tribulations of various kinds: pain, sickness, temptations and disappointments, invade the breast of the most righteous and temperate among men; the cup of mixture more or less impregnated with the wormwood and the gall, is the lot of all men, designed to effect valuable purposes by him, who afflicts not willingly, nor without a righteous and benevolent cause, the children of men. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are the ways of Almighty wisdom higher than our ways; and his thoughts than our thoughts. We see a little, and but a very little, of the amazing universal plan of his government, over rational and immortal spirits. It is beyond the reach of the most exalted human faculties to comprehend his wisdom, throughout the righteous administration of his providence, which is unsearchable: it is our duty, as frail dependent beings, to meet every dispensation of his providence, with that resignation of spirit which incessantly breathes the humble language of "Not my will, O Lord! but thine in all things be done." Under the evils which we feel, and which our prudence could not prevent, let us rather implore divine aid to endure them with patience, than to pray that they may be removed from us; lest, like ignorant children, we should seek to avoid that portion from our heavenly Father's hand, by which he graciously designed to remove or prevent a greater evil. This is not the place of our rest, but a state of probation, a painful pilgrimage through a land of pits and snares. Narrow is the path which leads to the regions of eternal peace.

The soul, by reason of its connexion with the body, enclosed within walls of flesh, cannot extend its views, or employ its faculties on divine objects, without frequent interruption. But when the days of its captivity are accomplished, its powers will be capable of a more glorious expansion; and, if bearing the inscription of holiness, it will then be put in full possession of that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, in the kingdom of immortality. In all the calamities to which we are subject in the house of our pilgrimage, we have a place of refuge to flee to, where safety is alone to be found; though indeed we must feel

in degree as men, yet we may possess the patience, resignation, and holy fortitude of Christians, who are looking for a better country ; a more excellent inheritance in that city " whose inhabitant cannot say, I am sick."

" Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Be ye, in your several stations in the church and in the world, as way-marks to the honest inquirers, who are asking their way to Zion ; and from a true sense of their condition, are crying out, " What shall we do to be saved ?" Shew forth by your example of charity, sobriety, temperance, and holiness of life, that you are redeemed from the spirit of the world, that lies in wickedness ; be not captivated by its trifling amusements, nor ensnared by its lying vanities, but retain the fear of God which will keep the heart clean, and prove a source of surest consolation, when all things else will be unavailing. Let the purity of your lives demonstrate, that your attention is fixed on things that are more excellent, that your affections are placed on things permanent and eternal ; essentially relating to the salvation of the soul. By this means you will become the consecrated temples of the Holy Ghost, and be a means of leading others in the way of righteousness.

Finally, Brethren, I commend you to God, the Shepherd of Israel, and to the Word of his grace, as the infallible guide to instruct us in what we shall do to be saved. This alone is able to direct our feet in the way of righteousness and peace ; to build us up in the most holy faith ; and in the end, to put us in possession of a glorious inheritance among the saints, that will never fade away.



ON
THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

FROM the revelations of the Spirit of God to the saints have proceeded the scriptures of truth, which contain a faithful historical account of the actings of God's people in divers ages, with many singular and remarkable providences attending them ; also, a prophetical account of several things whereof some are already past and some yet to come, and a full and ample account of all the chief principles of the doctrines of Christ held forth in divers precious declarations, exhortations and sentences, which by the moving of God's Spirit were at several times and upon sundry occasions, spoken and written unto some churches and their pastors. Nevertheless, because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary rule of faith and manners. Yet because they give a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they have all their excellency and certainty : for as by the inward testimony of the Spirit we do alone truly know them, so they testify that the Spirit is that guide by which the saints are led into all truth ; therefore, according to the scriptures, the Spirit is the first and principal leader.

God hath seen meet that herein we should, as in a looking-glass, see the conditions and experiences of the saints of old, that finding our experience answer to theirs, we might thereby be the more confirmed and comforted, and our hope of obtaining the same end strengthened ; that observing the providences attending them, seeing the snares they were liable to, and beholding their deliverances, we may thereby be made wise unto salvation, and seasonably reproved and instructed in righteousness. This is the great work of the scriptures and their service to us, that we may witness them fulfilled in us, and so discern

the stamp of God's spirit and ways upon them, by the inward acquaintance we have with the same spirit and work in our hearts.

They are truly the most excellent of all writings whatsoever, whether we consider the Holy Author of them, the great God of heaven and earth, or the inspired penmen of them, the holy prophets and apostles, who spake and wrote as they were moved and guided by the holy Ghost ; or the divine truths therein declared and testified of, concerning the wonderful love of God for the reconciliation and salvation of lost mankind, through repentance toward God, and faith in, and obedience to, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. ii. 14. Upon which considerations they are worthy of preference to all other books in the world ; for they are the words, sayings, and testimonies of God, scriptures of truth, divinely inspired writings, containing the judgments and statutes of the Lord. But notwithstanding the divine authority and excellent contents of the holy scriptures, which God hath preserved against all the rage and malice of satan and his wicked instruments, and which ought to be prized above all books and writings ; yet may we not take up a lamentation and say, how are they slighted and neglected by many in our day. And therefore let all careless and negligent ones repent of their mispent time, and apply themselves henceforward to the diligent reading and meditating in the holy scriptures, which, as the apostle saith, 'are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus,' 2 Tim. iii. 15. ; being profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, though his most innocent life, most holy doctrine, and undeniable miracles, were sufficient to prove that he was the Messiah, the prophet which Moses said should come into the world ; yet he was pleased to confirm his divine mission by testimonies out of the law, the prophets and the psalms. Thus we find him reproving the Jews for their unbelief by the writings of Moses, 'There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust ; for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me ; for he wrote of me : But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words ?' John, v. 45 to 47.

As he gave his disciples this excellent copy, so they were very diligent in writing after it. The apostles were eminent for quoting the holy scriptures of the old testament in proof of their doctrine. Paul proves that the gospel of God was pro-

mised by his prophets in the holy scriptures ; that Jesus Christ was made of the seed of David according to the flesh ; that he died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures ; that he ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. When he was a prisoner at Rome, he expounded and testified the kingdom of God unto the Jews, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets.

Peter refutes those mockers at the wonderful works of God that appeared in the hundred and twenty on the day of Pentecost, when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, certifying that they were not drunken as they supposed, but this was that which was spoken by the prophet Joel ; also proving that the patriarch David did speak of the resurrection of Christ whom God raised up ; and that being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he had shed forth that which they now saw and heard.

The apostle James using these phrases, ‘ according to the scriptures,’ ‘ the scripture was fulfilled,’ do ye think that the scripture speaketh in vain,’ shows that the writings of the old testament were intimately known to him, as the other passages do manifest they were to the other apostles.

Stephen, the first deacon of the church at Jerusalem, and martyr of Christ, defended himself against the blasphemous words which the suborned witnesses pretended he spake against Moses and God, by a series of arguments drawn from the writings of Moses.

The Ethiopian eunuch, treasurer to queen Candace, showed his studiousness in the holy scriptures, and hath left an example to others, to omit no opportunity of reading and meditating in them. He had been at Jerusalem to worship, and was returning to his own country, and sitting in his chariot, he read Esaias the prophet from which Philip preached unto him Jesus ; and the eunuch believed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Oh ! happy reading of the evangelical prophet ! the Jewish proselyte became a Christian convert ; while he read the old testament, he found Him who is the fountain of the new.

The Bereans are recorded to be more noble than those of Thessalonica ; and what is it for ? Why, that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so, as Paul had declared unto them.—Where observe it is not said they searched the

scriptures, and then received the word ; but they received the word, and then searched the scriptures. The entrance of the word opened their understandings, and was as a key, to unlock the meaning of the scriptures to them.*

Timothy, whom Paul calls his dearly beloved son, was an early scripturist, being trained up in sacred writ from his childhood. 'From a child,' says he, 'thou hast known the holy scriptures.' And he makes honourable mention of Timothy's grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice, for their unfeigned faith ; godly women that took care of his virtuous education, wherein they are a pattern to all parents, to train up their children in the reading and knowledge of the holy scriptures, which may serve for a reproof to those who neglect or omit to educate their children therein.

Two things are absolutely necessary to every one that desires to know a spiritual profiting in reading the holy scriptures, viz. a mind rightly disposed and prepared to receive instruction in the things of God, and a teacher able and sufficient to instruct us therein. Now, to be rightly prepared for divine and spiritual instruction, we must be meek and lowly in heart ; we must be humble and fearers of God ; we must be babes and fools for Christ. If we have not this disposition of mind, we are not subjects capable of heavenly instruction. But whence cometh this preparation ? Have we it of ourselves ? Can we thus dispose and prepare our own hearts ? No, in no wise.—It is the gift of God, the work of his Holy Spirit ; for 'the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.'

Now when the mind is thus prepared, yet we cannot teach ourselves, neither can any man of himself teach us : for who is sufficient for these things ? Who is able to instruct us in them ? None but He whose name is 'Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.' And as he is able to instruct us, so is he willing and ready to do it. 'The word is nigh thee, saith the scriptures, even in thy mouth and in thy heart.'

* Those who receive the Word and are obedient to it, if they have the holy scriptures, are never induced by this divine Opener to doubt their authority. They find that its requisitions are in strict conformity with them, and are confirmed and encouraged in their religious duties by the correspondent testimonies of those invaluable writings.

THOUGHTS

ON

REASON AND REVELATION,

PARTICULARLY THE

REVELATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.



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THOUGHTS, &c.

It is very questionable whether much service is done to Religion, by undervaluing the faculty of Reason. Man, the only inhabitant of the globe who is capable of religion, is also the only one possessed of reason; and indeed it is the possession of the latter which renders him a proper subject of the former. Without reason, man could not be accountable for any of his actions.

It appears therefore evident, that religion is inseparable from reason; and if we examine the true meaning of those religious persons who are taught to undervalue reason, we should probably find that they do not object to the legitimate use of this faculty, but to the exercise of it in deciding upon subjects which are beyond the sphere of its powers. To assign it therefore its place, and to guard against its encroachment on any other principle in the mind, which ought to have a free scope for action allowed to it, form a part of the proper business of a religious person.

Reason is the faculty by which the mind compares one thing with another, and gives the preference to what appears the best. It may be aptly compared to a balance; for when several motives for acting or suffering, doing or refraining, loving or hating, are presented to the mind, if it be in perfect order, it indicates which are the most weighty, and which of those several acts the mind should engage in. Right reason, having sure grounds on which to argue, and no sinister bias to warp it, must always attain to a right conclusion. But reason, like the instrument with which it has been compared, is capable of being put out of order, and it may also happen that the subject to be weighed may be too mighty for the examining faculty.

It is amply proved by lamentable experience, that there are many causes which bias our reason. The most powerful of these are the passions and the force of custom, which more frequently mislead reason, than yield to its direction; and the natural temperament, over which it has little control: and even where the influence of these is in great measure subdued,

still the subjects to be examined are so disproportioned to the share of reason allotted to man, that the difficulties are not removed. If it were to attempt the investigation of Divine things, with a judgment unbiassed by either of the former causes, it would notwithstanding never be able to arrive at the conviction that its perceptions of the object of research were infallibly correct, unless aided by some superior information; and the Christian religion teaches us to believe that this information or evidence is Divine revelation.

No created being by its natural powers can rise above its natural sphere. To reach a sublimer station it must be assisted by strength superior to its own; a power equal to the height of its ascent. It is only by the influence of Divine illumination that reason is capacitated to mount above its sub-lunary limits, and in any degree to apprehend the things of God. This dispels the fogs of prejudice and passion, restores reason to its full and proper use in religion, and furnishes it with a clear sense of duty and ability to perform it. The faculties are thus brightened, and raised to a higher pitch of usefulness than could ever have been reached by them, unassisted by Divine grace.

Man, with respect to the Author of creation, is infinitely more beneath him in understanding, than a new-born infant is beneath its parent. But as, when the child has learned to love the parent, and to obey his admonitions, it is protected from many harms, from which it cannot secure itself; and furnished with many comforts, which it has no power to obtain; so, revelation is the warning voice of heavenly goodness, that preserves man from evils, which otherwise he cannot avoid; and leads him to enjoyments, which otherwise he can neither taste nor conceive.

In those seasons, when custom or the passions, or both, strongly impel the mind to the commission of evil; and when reason, so far from standing firm, is known to side with the enemy; it is indeed truly desirable that some power should intervene, to rescue from an overthrow. When temperament, meanwhile, is affording its ardours, which hurry on to gratification; or its languors, which discline to virtuous exertion; is it not then also truly desirable that there should be found some effectual check, or some effectual incitement:—or, to use the simple, energetic language of the prophet, when a man is disposed to turn aside to the right hand or to the left, that he should hear a voice to instruct him, “This is the way, walk in it?”

Some have imagined it beneath the Divine Greatness, for

the Sovereign Lord of all, to stoop so low as to make man a peculiar object of his notice and regard. To such as mistake those sure marks of degeneracy, *pride* and *haughtiness*, for greatness of soul, this may seem reasonable; but in him to whom pride is abomination, and as distant from his similitude as darkness is from light, it cannot have any place. What it is not below him to create, it cannot be beneath him to regard, proportionably to the end he made it for; and seeing man was created "for a purpose of his glory," and to partake of his felicity, it would derogate from his wisdom and goodness, to suppose he should look upon it as below him to enable man to answer the great ends of his creation; which he could not by any means do without a competent assistance from his Maker.

If the preceding remarks be admitted as true, we must perceive that man is not a being quite so sufficient as he often apprehends himself: hence he should learn not to think more highly of himself than he ought: and as a large portion of the misery which abounds in the world, may be justly attributed to this fatal self-sufficiency and importance, it is very desirable that the truth of these reflections should not only be acknowledged, but universally suffered to influence the conduct. But proud man is naturally averse to this necessary feeling of his dependence. He knows not how to submit to be, or to think himself, nothing. He would fain plume himself with some importance, some estimation or deserving of his own; yet all his pretences to merit are false and vain. The dignity of human nature consists not in self-sufficiency. The *most exalted* of created beings neither exist, nor act independent of their Creator; much less man, who in his primitive purity was made lower than the angels. He stands in continual need of Divine help; and his true dignity consists in being, by his reason, above all inferior creatures, capable of *consciously receiving* that assistance, and of being thereby preferred to a blessed communion with his Maker. A deep impression of the truth of this doctrine would make a man afraid, not only dogmatically to determine, respecting Divine subjects, but even lightly to speak of them. It would make him seem even in his own view a fool, and often such, in that of others. This pride cannot endure, and what it cannot endure, it strives to reject. It is therefore at variance with this doctrine, and one must be subdued for the other to flourish. In the Bible there are many passages proclaiming the imbecility of man. These stand in the way of the proud reasoner's argumentation; and these therefore, rather than suffer his career to be obstructed,

he is inclined to disbelieve and to reject. That to which we incline, we readily embrace; and thus is ushered in that wide-wasting evil, infidelity; the origin of which, the preceding paragraph is designed to describe.

The volume which, by way of eminence, has the general name of *The Bible*, is well known to be a collection of books of various authors; written at distant intervals, and on different occasions; but all supposed to teach, either directly or figuratively, the practice of piety, and the means of man's acceptance with his Creator.

There is a general division of these writings into two parts, namely, those which relate to the old covenant, and those which relate to the new, commonly called the *Old* and the *New Testament*. It may be best to begin the survey of these writings with the *New Testament*.

1. Before any book, professing to relate facts, can be entitled to credit, its authenticity and veracity must be established. Now there is no book in the world of equal age, whose authenticity is established upon firmer ground than the *New Testament*; so that if a sceptic, unable to withstand the arguments which it affords in favour of Christianity, should be disposed to reject it, he must be driven to the absurdity of rejecting all the historians of the same age; a piece of folly which would disgrace a school-boy.

The apostles and evangelists were competent witnesses, and could not be deceived in the facts which they recorded. They do not pretend to give us an account of transactions done in remote countries, or which had happened in ages before their time, but of those which they had themselves witnessed with their eyes and with their ears. They had lived with Christ during his ministry; they had heard his discourses, they had seen his wonderful works, and consequently received them on the testimony of their own senses. If Plato has been deemed a competent witness, and in every respect qualified to compose the biographical account of his master Socrates, and of his discourses in prison, because he was present on these occasions, surely the evangelical writers are competent witnesses of the facts which they relate. For they were neither enthusiasts nor fanatics. And as they could not be deceived themselves, so they neither would nor did deceive others. They were men of probity and piety, who abominated a lie. They could obtain neither pleasure, honour nor profit in this world, by obtruding falsehoods on mankind; but on the contrary, they were exposed to the loss of all these, and even of life itself, for being

preachers of the doctrine of the Cross, and bearing witness to the truth of Christianity.

The profane authors, as they are called, though now held in general and deserved credit, and their narratives relied on, as the best source of information concerning their respective countries and governments, suffered a temporary eclipse during the decay of learning in the middle ages of Christianity; but the sacred writings before, during, and since the same period, have been uninterruptedly handed down from generation to generation; appealed to by both the friends and the enemies of the doctrines which they contain; and cited by writers of all ages, even the earliest, since their publication, in a manner which shows that they have always been such, or very nearly such, as we find them at present. Nay, further, notwithstanding they have been multiplied by manuscripts beyond any other book in the world, which might easily occasion some errors, the authenticity of these writings is in no wise affected, and the uniform tenor of their doctrine is in no wise altered. The consequence is, that we must either dispute all ancient history, or admit the authority of the New Testament.

From the New Testament we learn not only the doctrines of Christianity, but the character of its Author. In this character we must immediately be struck with his power and goodness; and it will be perceived, that the exertion of his might was always a proof of his benignity. The evangelists record numerous instances of miraculous power which show him to have been in the possession of faculties far above human. Unprejudiced observers naturally and justly concluded that they were divine; and consequently yielded up their minds to the belief that his doctrine should be received. "We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." It is already shown that the history of these transactions is authentic, by an evidence which on other occasions would be deemed conclusive. To us, therefore, at this time, who are competent to estimate the force of evidence, the miracles speak the same language as they did to the earliest believer; they prove the credibility, (alas! that proof should *now* be wanted)—they prove the credibility, the divine authority of Him who performed them.

In the New Testament also not only an account is given of the miraculous works of our Lord, but we are further informed that he appointed certain men who were his witnesses, to whom he committed the propagation of the Christian doctrine, and likewise endued with the power of working miracles in support

of their mission. They acknowledge that they derived their ability and authority from Him, and they wrote several books which concur with the doctrine promulgated by their Divine Master, in which they declare, "we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were *eye-witnesses* of his majesty." 2 Peter, i. 16.

2. This short view of the New Testament will be of use, in leading back the mind to a proper estimation of the other general division of the scriptures, namely, the Old Testament. From the decision given by Christ and his apostles, respecting that more ancient part, there is no appeal. We must consider their verdict as a revelation, in which right reason immediately acquiesces—knowing the divine authority by which it is pronounced.

Now, both our Lord and his apostles frequently mention the writers of the Old Testament; they always mention them in terms of high approbation; and sometimes plainly assert their divine inspiration. In particular, Moses is honoured by our Lord with marks of singular approbation; a belief of his writings is considered by Christ as conducive to the Jews' belief in himself, and their disbelief of them, as a bar to the reception of his doctrines. John, v. 46, 47. The apostles also, speak of Moses and the prophets, as of genuine and inspired characters. This uniform testimony, therefore, of Christ and his apostles to the writers of the Old Testament, is the incontrovertible authority for their credibility and admission among Christians; and thus we have both the Old and the New established upon a foundation, against which no reasonable man can object, without being driven to the difficulty of believing some absurdity.

The manner in which the sacred scriptures have been transmitted to us, their language and style, together with the minute circumstantiality of the facts and doctrines recorded in them, added to the moral impossibility of imposing forged writings upon mankind—are all indisputable proofs of their *genuineness and authenticity*. Equally satisfactory is the evidence for the *credibility* of the writers. For they had a perfect knowledge of the subjects which they have related, and their moral character was never impeached by their keenest opponents. In most instances their accounts were published among the people who witnessed the event which they have recorded, and who could easily have detected falsehood if any such there had been, but who did not attempt to question either the reality of those facts or the fidelity of the narrators. There

is an entire harmony between the sacred writers and profane history, both natural and civil; and the reality of the principal facts, related in the Bible, is perpetuated and commemorated by monuments that subsist to this day in every country, where either Jews or Christians are to be found. And that the scriptures are not merely entitled to be received as credible, but also as containing the revealed will of God,—in other words, that they are divinely inspired,—we have evidence of various kinds amounting to moral demonstration. For, on the one hand, their sacred origin is evinced by the most illustrious external attestations, viz. miracles and prophecy, which carry with them the most manifest proofs of a Divine interposition; and which it cannot reasonably be supposed that God would ever give, or permit to be given, to an impostor. And, on the other hand, the scriptures have the most excellent internal characters of truth and goodness, in the sublimity, excellence, and sanctity of the system of doctrines and morals which they announce,—in the harmony and connexion that subsist between all the parts of which they consist,—and in their admirable tendency (which is shown by its effects wherever the scriptures are cordially and sincerely believed) to promote the glory of God and the good of mankind, and the cause of virtue and righteousness in the world.

Convinced of their incontrovertible authority, man resembles a child, to which allusion has already been made. The child knows the parent's superior wisdom, and also his love and power. It therefore submits readily to injunctions, the full scope of which it does not comprehend. So the Christian receives the scriptures. When they treat on subjects above his comprehension, or when the inspired persons relate or prescribe, in the name of the Almighty, things different from what man's limited reason may be tempted to judge best, he does not therefore revolt; he rather waits in humble trust, and at most suspends his judgment; attributing the difficulty to his own scanty powers, and not to any inconsistency in the sacred record, established as it is by the voices of those whose authority he cannot question. This, his humility enables him to do with ease; but pride forbids the sceptic to submit, because he will have reason to be his only guide. He arrogantly asserts he is not obliged to believe, and so rejects that which he cannot comprehend. His scepticism, like other habits, becomes strengthened by exercise; and some persons have become so blinded that because they were unable to explain the moral government of God, they have been induced to finish their career of unbelief, with denying that he

exists : and yet these very men, with all their boasted powers, are totally ignorant of the mode by which their will directs the muscles of their hand while writing the record of their own folly.

The scriptures inform us of an ingredient in the religious character, without which they declare it to be impossible to please God. Who then, that is desirous of pleasing him, would want this qualification? How can a man be religious without such a desire? how can he hope for acceptance, unless this desire be fulfilled? This necessary preliminary of Divine approbation is Faith. It implies belief, trust, confidence, and arises not merely from the man, but takes its birth from the operation of the Holy Spirit in him, which works by it to the sanctification of the heart, and the production of every Christian virtue. When the soul is fully possessed of true faith, it is at rest : for it reposes on the goodness of God ; and hence may be discovered the reason that faith is indispensably necessary to an acceptance with him. Gospel faith in man believes the truth of all that is revealed by the Spirit, both in the heart and in the sacred writings ; because it feels it, savours it, and is one with it. It not only assents to the scriptural accounts of the incarnation and whole process of Christ in Judea, but it also receives his internal appearance, consents to his operation, and concurs with it. Faith takes away the solicitude to know why one mode of salvation is proposed ; another not. It believes that to be best which God has ordained ; and it acquiesces, where it cannot fathom.

The fall and the redemption of man, subjects the most momentous that can engage the human mind, and against which infidelity is often aiming its bolts, present no insurmountable difficulties to the view of faith. Well might our Lord declare belief to be the condition of salvation ! The scripture relates the fall of man ; and our experience and observation prove to us, that man is indeed in a debased state ; “ serving divers lusts and pleasures, hateful and hating.” The scripture also gives an account of the occasion of his fall ; which was no other than not retaining his faith in the Divine command. It is also worthy of remark, that this injunction was not directed against what is called a moral evil : but its violation was immediately followed by the loss of that life in which the parents of mankind held sweet communion with their Creator. Now how simple ! how little requiring the mazes of deep and critical investigation ! how adapted to “ the way-faring man though a fool,” is this plain, obvious consideration, That if want of faith made man fall, faith naturally restores him ! If we pursue the

subject a little further, we may recollect that the tempter seduced Eve by means of specious, though fallacious reasoning against the Divine precept and prohibition. So, in like manner, as perverted reason led on to the fall, unenlightened and biassed reason still averts the sceptical mind from the offered restoration in Christ.

But, before we quit this subject, it will be proper to observe the manner in which faith effects this restoration. Not, by a mere belief of that which Christ has performed on behalf of man; but by a full belief also in all his precepts, so far as they are made known; accompanied, as it must be, with a conformity to them, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Then pride, anger, lust, deceit, and covetousness, must soon take their departure; and the very kingdom of heaven be revealed in that heart, where humility, love, purity, truth, and contentment, have made their abode.

A great man in ancient time said, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." This may be considered as an invitation to subject doctrine to the test of experience. And probably it will be found that if any one will humbly and sincerely accept the written revelation of scripture; and will set about the practice of a Christian life in good earnest, such a one will not be long without observing his own extreme inability to persevere in a steady course of true gospel-obedience. He will discover the want of some help and consolation; of something that can strengthen his good purposes in the moment of temptation and weakness; and calm his almost desponding mind, dejected under the consideration of his former failings and sins. He will find that he is not to expect help from the world; for its pursuits are already become irksome. He will perceive the generality of his acquaintance to have little relish for religion; and many of those who make profession of it, to be as weak as himself.

But the difficulty of obtaining an object, when the mind is convinced of its importance and value, may increase the fervency of the desire to be helped. Thus feeling, from certain and painful experience, the want of a Saviour, the mind is glad to believe that there is one. It is the only source left, from which help can be expected; and most rationally, though not by any perceptible train of reasoning, doth the soul address itself in secret supplication for his assistance. In due time, though perhaps not exactly when it is craved, the balm arrives; the soul finds "grace to help in time of need;" and experiences the completion of the promises of Christ, as recorded in scripture: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be

comforted:" "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." So far scripture, as applicable to the soul's particular state, is proved, and found true, by experience. By experience also, faith is strengthened and confirmed. The mind is not then disposed to controvert difficult or obscure parts of scripture; for doubt, like other things, requires its proper soil to grow in. Those things which are manifest are accepted; and no attempt is made, with unhallowed hands, to rend the veil from that which is more mysterious; or, failing in this, to invalidate its authority, because it is beyond the reach of finite comprehension. Faith now directs the use of reason; and when faith is once firmly fixed on Christ, the most implicit obedience to the precepts of the gospel, is an act in perfect accordance with the soundest and most exalted reason.

Extract from "fragments in Prose and Verse," by E. Smith

"It is declared in the scriptures, that the natural man knoweth not the things of God, neither can he comprehend them, and I am convinced that this is true. God only requires the heart and its affections, and after those are wholly devoted to Him, he Himself worketh all things within it and for it. 'My son, give me thy heart;' and all the rest is conformity and obedience. This is the simple ground of all religion, which implies a reunion of the soul to a principle which it had lost in its corrupt and fallen state. Mankind have opposed this doctrine, because it has a direct tendency to lay very low the pride and elevation of the heart, and the perverseness of the will, and prescribes a severe mortification to the passions; it will be found, notwithstanding, either in time or eternity, a most important truth.

"The natural powers of man may be sanctified by the influences of religion in the soul, and cease from opposition in matters wherein formerly they took supreme direction; but until they are in awful silence before God, the work of redemption is unfelt and unknown.

"Religion is an universal concern; the only important business of our lives. The learned and the ignorant are equally the object of it; and it is highly becoming the Father of Spirits, the friend of man, that all the spirits which He has made, should be equal candidates for his regard; that his mercy should operate upon a principle, of which mankind are equal

partakers. If the reason or the understanding were alone capable of religious discernment, nine-tenths of the world would be excluded from his providence; but not so does his mercy operate. He influences by love, and the affections are the only objects of it.

“Look into the opinions of men, contemplate their great diversity, their complete opposition to each other; and where shall the serious, the reflecting mind, find a peaceful station to rest upon? Where shall it find ‘the shadow of a mighty rock, in a weary land’ of fluctuating devices and tempests of opinion? Not in human literature, not in the inventions of men; but in silence before the God of our lives, in pure devotion of the heart, and in prostration of the soul. The knee bends before the Majesty of Omnipotence, and all the powers of the mind say, Amen!—In matters so important as pure religion, the salvation of the immortal soul, it is highly worthy of Divine Wisdom that He should take the supreme direction to Himself alone, and not leave any part of the work to the device of man: for it is evident to every candid inquirer, that whenever he interferes he spoils it. Religion is of so pure and spotless a nature, that a touch will contaminate it. It is uniform, consistent, and of the same complexion and character in all nations. Languages and customs may greatly differ: but the language of pure devotion of the heart to its Maker is one and the same over the face of the whole earth. It is acknowledged and felt ‘through the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace.’ There is a harmony and consistency in the works of God, external and internal; the external operations of nature are strictly typical of internal things; the visible of the invisible world. The scriptures plainly point to the analogy between the natural and spiritual world, in numberless instances; Christ is called ‘the sun of righteousness,’ ‘the light of the world,’ ‘the bright, and the morning star.’”



THE HAPPY EFFECTS OF RELIGION ON THE MIND IN HUMBLE LIFE.

URSULA COTTOM, the subject of this memoir knew nothing of her early history, having been an inmate in the Foundling Hospital, in London; and on inquiry, no clue to her relations could be found in the records of that Institution.

When about twelve years of age, she was placed as an apprentice with a man and his wife who were both pious people, of the Methodist connexion; this she always considered as a providential circumstance in her life, and observed, in her simple style, "that a watchful Providence had good things in store for her;" she was taken with them to the Methodist meetings, and was soon favoured to become acquainted with the visitations of Divine love in her own mind; and before her apprenticeship expired, joined the Society, and was a zealous and consistent member of it. After remaining a year over the term of her apprenticeship, as a servant in this family, she went to live as housekeeper with Richard Cottom, of Scarborough, a worthy man, also of the Methodist Society, and about four years afterwards became his wife. She was then an active member and class-leader among the Methodists.

Some time after this, she felt her mind drawn towards the Society of Friends, and frequently attended their meetings; being convinced of the value and importance of silent waiting upon God, and of close attention to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in her own heart. Her husband at first strongly objected to her leaving the Methodist connexion; but being convinced of the propriety of granting her full liberty of conscience, finally complied; and, in 1798, she became united to Friends, with whom she remained an upright and consistent member, until the close of her life.

She contributed to the support of herself and her husband, by keeping a small shop; in which situation she was a remarkable example of the strictest honesty and uprightness; and also showed

by her life and conversation how much good may be done in the humblest sphere, if the heart is but influenced, and directed by the power of Divine grace.

She was an active distributor of tracts and other good books ; and her company was often sought both by the rich and poor, particularly when labouring under doubt and discouragement, or groaning under the burden of a guilty mind, or an awakened conscience ; and she was faithful in exhorting some, and consoling others amongst those who came to tell their sorrows, or to ask her advice.

Her husband lived till he was ninety-five years of age ; and during the latter part of his life was quite dependent upon her exertions for his support. She appeared to do all in her power for him, and maintained the character of a faithful wife, and kind nurse but she now found her means so diminished, that she was glad to accept one of the residences provided by the benevolence of the late Joseph Taylor, who left funds by which fourteen poor families are provided with comfortable dwellings. In this residence she still carried on her little business ; but being unable to do much, she found the advantage of having, by the strictest economy, laid up some provision for old age. The repugnance which she evinced to accept any assistance from a fund, which could be properly applied to lengthen out her little store, was truly praiseworthy, though almost carried to excess. This evidently did not arise from pride but from a spirit of independence and scrupulous honesty ; and when she did accept of assistance, a most exact account was kept of the application of every part of it.

At this time her heart was filled with gratitude and thankfulness and, placed in a small but clean and comfortable apartment, she was led to exclaim, " Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life." Her piety and contented cheerfulness exhibited an instructive lesson to all who visited her ; one Friend of great experience remarked, that when she was in affliction, a visit to Ursula Cottom was always a means of consoling her mind, and that she returned benefited by her instructive example and pious resignation.

She latterly suffered much from ill health ; in the 1st month, 1833, being then seventy-five years old, she was taken very ill, and early expressed her belief that she should not recover.

A Friend calling to see her, asked her if she wanted any thing ? " Oh, no !" she replied, " I have more done for me than any one could ask for or think of ; I am surrounded by so many comforts through the kindness of my heavenly Father. How can I be thankful enough ?" A wish being expressed that she should not

want any thing, she said, "Dear hearts! you are very kind; my heart overflows with love and gratitude. My heavenly Father has been merciful to me every way: my pain has been very great but I trust that the rod which He sees meet for me, is intended to purify me from something that is left; and that in his own time, He will take me to his kingdom. My heart feels already united with those who are around the throne, ascribing to Him, and to the Lamb, all glory, and honour, and praise, which are his due."

Another time, awaking from a slumber, and taking the hand of one, who sat by her, she said, "I have been favoured this morning with such a remarkable sight of the wisdom and goodness of God. O! it was beyond all expression! His marvellous goodness and mercy to his creature, man; how He provides for his comfort; and feeds both him and the beasts of the earth. And I bless and praise his holy Name, that He has surrounded me with comforts—with every thing I want. Thou seest I am nearly a lump of clay: 'Dust, thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.' This was the sentence pronounced upon fallen man; and I am willing, very willing, to die; my body feels like unto the grave, where it will soon be laid; but my spirit is filled with unspeakable love and mercy, I feel I shall be clothed with the nature of Christ, my Saviour, and for this my spirit shall praise him."

On a belief being expressed that she would be sustained through the conflict, she said, "O, yes! my Saviour is with me, He will sustain me through all; He will conquer all things for me, and give me the victory."

At another time, under a sensible feeling of the Divine goodness she said, "I am endeavoring to clasp, by faith, my dear Redeemer who has done, and will do much for me. It is said, 'the righteous hath hope in his death;' I have no merit of my own; ah, no! *it is the interest I feel in the all-atoning sacrifice.*"

A Friend, who called to see her, expressed a hope that she felt God to be near her. She replied, "Yes bless and praise Him! I am seeking after inward stillness."

The following morning she observed to the same Friend. "I am still here, a monument of love and mercy:" after which she repeated the following lines—

"Jesus! lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is nigh.

"Hide me, oh! my Saviour, hide!
'Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh! receive my soul at last.

' Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee,
Leave, Oh! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.

All my help on Thee is laid;
All my wants to thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head,
With the shadow of thy wing.' "

A short time after this she prayed thus: "Pure and holy God! fit and prepare me for an entrance into that city, where nothing that is impure, nothing that worketh an abomination, or that maketh or loveth a lie, can ever enter."

A short time before her death, she said, "I found in the night I had a strong city; 'salvation has God appointed for walls and bulwarks.' O! thank God for all things! 'He is my strength and my song—He also is become my salvation!' Blessed and everlasting God! Thou wilt never leave me, nor forsake me. After this, although she continued a few days, she was not able to express much. A few hours before her close, on being asked if she was in much pain, she said, "Death! death!" and after laying still some time, gently departed.

Her attendants bear witness to the patience and cheerfulness with which she was enabled to endure acute bodily pain. One of them observed, the sting of death was taken away; as frequently during her illness, she burst forth into expressions of praise and thanksgiving, similar to the few which have been recorded.

She was indeed a remarkable instance of the expansive influence of Divine love—a theme on which she often dwelt—which enabled her to soar above all her sufferings, and caused her heart to overflow with praise and thanksgiving, though placed in a very humble station, and furnished with little more than the necessities of life. What a lesson of instruction is this! How empty at such an hour, are the riches and pleasures, and pursuits of this world! when weighed in the balance they appear as less than nothing, and vanity. Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which He hath promised to them that love Him?

THE END.

THE
TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH

IN
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

PLAINLY ASSERTED.



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THE TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH, &c.

IN this age of speculative religion, it is of the utmost consequence to the Christian believer, earnestly to strive to keep the faith which was once delivered to the saints. Not only is it necessary that he should believe the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, but in order to partake of the benefits which the gospel was designed to confer upon mankind, he must be possessed of that "faith which is of the operation of God," through which alone he is enabled to discern and receive those things which God "hath hid from the wise and prudent, but revealeth unto babes." Without the intervention of divine light producing this faith, the powers of the human mind are totally inadequate to reach to the knowledge of God, and to comprehend those mysterious truths which the gospel is intended to unveil. Hence it was, when Peter, in reply to the question, "Whom do ye say that I, the Son of Man am," had declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," that Christ answered him, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." In no other way has it been possible for a single rational creature ever to ascertain and savingly to believe in the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, but by the revelations of his Holy Spirit. The conceptions of carnal men, however strong or subtle their reasoning may be, are very little better than mere conjecture in this subject: the truth stands wholly unaffected by their notions; it remains eternally the same, whether they acknowledge it or not.

"No man," said Christ, "knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Whence it is plain that Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and the soul of man, the only "Way" by which he can come to know God. He who "was in the beginning," who "was with God and was God," "took upon Him the seed of Abraham," in which "He gave Himself a ransom for all," "bore our sins in His own body on the tree," "suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God," "offered Himself without spot to God," "a propitiation for the sins of the whole world," and is "the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him." Having thus opened the way and consecrated it by His blood, He hath appeared the second time without sin, by His "light," "grace," or "spirit," in the hearts of all mankind, in order to complete the work of salvation, by destroying sin, and bringing the soul to the knowledge of "the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, which is life eternal." For it is only in a state of purification from sin, that man can be prepared to receive the unfoldings of the mystery of Christ, "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the

spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Equally vain then are all the attempts of unregenerate men, either to discover, or to disprove the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily:" for as "no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed, so no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

With the view to enforce this Christian doctrine, we shall subjoin selections from the writings of divers persons, who knew in whom they trusted, and unreservedly believed the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, respecting the benefits of His incarnation, sufferings, death, resurrection and mediation.

George Fox, in an address to the governor of Barbadoes, written in 1671, says, "We own and believe in the only wise, omnipotent and everlasting God, the Creator of all things in heaven and earth, and the preserver of all that He hath made, who is God over all, blessed for ever; to whom be all honour, glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and for evermore. And we own and believe in Jesus Christ His beloved and only begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature; by whom were all things created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities or powers, all things were created by Him. And we own and believe, that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem, and that He was buried and rose again the third day by the power of His Father for our justification; and that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God. This Jesus who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles is our foundation, and we believe there is no other foundation to be laid but that which is laid, even Christ Jesus, who tasted death for every man, shed His blood for all men, is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. He is now come in spirit, and "hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true." He rules in our hearts by his law of love and life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. We have no life but by Him, for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, by whose blood we are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works to serve the living God."

In an epistle to all serious professors of the Christian re-

ligion, Isaac Pennington says, "There are two or three things in my heart to open to you, how it is with me in reference to them, for indeed I have not been taught to deny any testimony the scriptures hold forth concerning the Lord Jesus, or any of His appearances, but am taught by the Lord more certainly and fully to own and acknowledge them. The first is concerning the Godhead which we own as the Scriptures express it, and as we have the sensible experimental knowledge of it: in which 'there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.' This I believe from my heart, and have infallible demonstrations of; for I know three and feel three in spirit, even an Eternal Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which are but one eternal God. Now consider seriously if a man from his heart believe thus concerning the eternal power and Godhead, that the Father is God, the Word God, the Holy Spirit God, and that these are one eternal God, waiting so to know God, and to be subject to him accordingly, is not this man in a right frame of heart towards the Lord in this respect?

"The second is concerning the offering of the Lord Jesus Christ without the gates of Jerusalem. I do exceedingly honour and esteem that offering, believing it had relation to the sins of the whole world, and was a propitiatory sacrifice to the Father therefor. And saith the apostle Peter, 'ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish;' who so offered himself up to God through the eternal Spirit. This we do own singly and nakedly as in the sight of the Lord; though I must confess we do not lay the sole stress upon that which is outward and visible, though we truly and fully acknowledge it in its place, but upon that which is inward and invisible, upon the inward life, the inward power, the spirit within; knowing and experiencing daily that that is it which doth the work."

In an "Incitation to Professors of Christianity," he again declares, "We do really in our hearts own that Christ, who came in the fulness of time in that prepared body, to do the Father's will, (His coming into the world, doctrine, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, &c.) in plainness and simplicity of heart, according as it is expressed in the letter of the Scriptures."—"We own no other Christ than that, nor hold forth no other thing for Christ but him who then appeared, and was made manifest in the flesh."

Referring to some expressions in a letter written to him, containing a charge of denying redemption by the blood of Christ, he says, "none upon the earth, as the Lord God knoweth, are so taught, and do so rightly and fully own redemp-

tion by the blood of Christ, as the Lord hath taught us to do: for we own the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ both outwardly and inwardly; both as it was shed on the cross, and as it is sprinkled in our consciences; and know the cleansing virtue thereof in the everlasting covenant, and in the light which is eternal; out of which light men have but a notion thereof, but do not truly know nor own it."—*The Holy Truth, &c. Defended.*

In a treatise, entitled, "Flesh and Blood of Christ," &c. he says, "God himself who knew what virtue was in the inward, yet hath pleased to make use of the outward; and who may contradict or slight His wisdom and counsel therein? Glorious was the appearance and manifestation of His Son in flesh; precious His subjection and holy obedience to his Father. His giving Himself up to death for sinners, was of great esteem in His eye; it was a spotless sacrifice of great value, and effectual for the remission of sins, and I do acknowledge humbly unto the Lord the remission of my sins thereby, and bless the Lord for it; even for giving up His Son to death for us all, and giving *all that believe in His name and power*, to partake of remission through Him."

In 1671, George Whitehead and William Penn published "A Serious Apology," in which after reciting their belief that every one shall be rewarded according to his works, that "none are justified but the children of God, that none are children, but who are led by the Spirit of God, and that none are so led but those that bring forth the fruits thereof which is holiness," they proceed with this full and explicit declaration of their faith—"We do believe in one Holy God Almighty, who is an eternal Spirit, the Creator of all things; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, His only Son, and express image of His substance; who took upon Him flesh and was in the world, and in life, doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension and mediation, perfectly did, and does continue to do, the will of God; to whose holy life, power, mediation and blood, we only ascribe our sanctification, justification, redemption and perfect salvation. And we believe in one Holy Spirit, that proceeds from the Father and the Son, a measure of which is given to all to profit with; and he that has one, has all, for these three are one, who is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, God over all, blessed for ever. Amen."

William Penn, in his "Primitive Christianity," chap. ix. sect. 1, expresses himself thus—"Lest any should say we are equivocal in our expressions, and allegorize away Christ's appearance in the flesh, meaning only thereby our own flesh; and that as often as we mention Him, we mean only a mystery, or a mystical sense of Him, be it as to his coming, birth, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, mediation, and judg.

ment; I would add, to prevent the well disposed from being staggered by such suggestions, and to inform and reclaim such as are under the power of prejudice, that we do, (we bless God,) religiously believe and confess to the glory of God the Father, and the honour of His dear and beloved Son, that Jesus Christ took our nature upon him, and was like unto us in all things, sin excepted; that He was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate the Roman governor, was crucified, dead, and buried in the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea; rose again the third day and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God, in the power and majesty of His Father, who will one day judge the world by Him, even that blessed man Christ Jesus, according to their works."

In a publication entitled "A Testimony to the Truth of God," William Penn again explains himself on this subject—"Because we press the necessity of people's receiving the inward and spiritual appearance of the Divine Word, in order to a right and beneficial application of whatsoever He, (Christ,) did for man, with respect to His life, miracles, death, sufferings, resurrection, ascension and mediation, our adversaries would have us deny any Christ without us; first, as to His Divinity, because they make us to confine Him within us; secondly, as to his humanity or manhood; because as He was the son of Abraham, David, and Mary, according to the flesh, He cannot be in us; and therefore we are heretics and blasphemers. Whereas we believe Him, according to Scripture, to be the son of Abraham, David, and Mary, after the flesh; and also God over all blessed for ever."*

Robert Barclay the apologist, writing on immediate revela

* William Penn having controverted the unscriptural doctrines of three distinct persons in the Deity, and the impossibility of God's pardoning sinners without a plenary satisfaction, &c. was falsely charged with denying the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the virtue of his propitiatory offering. In a letter upon the subject addressed to John Collenges one of his accusers, he makes the following defence. "The matter insisted upon relating chiefly to us on this occasion was, that we in common with Socinians, do not believe Christ to be the eternal Son of God, and I am brought for proof of the charge. To this hath been already answered that my book called 'The Sandy Foundation Shaken,' touched not upon this, but trinity and separate personality, &c. I have two things to do, first, to show that I exprest nothing that divested Christ of his divinity, next to declare my true meaning and faith in the matter." After showing the incorrectness of his opponent's conclusions, he says—"It is manifest then, that though I may deny the trinity of separate persons in one Godhead, yet I do not consequentially deny the Deity of Jesus Christ. And now I tell thee my faith in this matter; I do heartily believe that Jesus Christ is the only true and everlasting God, by whom all things were made that are made in the heavens above or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth: that he is, as omnipotent, so omniscient and omnipresent—therefore God."

tion, declares his faith in these words—"The infinite and most wise God, who is the foundation, root and spring of all operation, hath wrought all things by His eternal Word and Son. This is that Word that was in the beginning with God; and was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made. This is that Jesus Christ by whom God created all things, by whom and for whom all things were created, that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; who therefore is called the first born of every creature. As then that infinite and incomprehensible Fountain of life and motion operateth in the creatures by His own eternal Word and power, so no creature has access again unto Him but in and by the Son, according to His own express words—"No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him;" again, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Hence He is fitly called the Mediator betwixt God and man: for having been with God from all eternity, being himself God, and also in time partaking of the nature of man, through Him is the goodness and love of God conveyed to mankind, and by Him again man receiveth and partaketh of these mercies." In his arguments on the 5th and 6th propositions after speaking of Christ in man, he says, "But by this as we do not at all intend to equal ourselves to that holy man the Lord Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin Mary, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, so neither do we destroy the reality of His present existence as some have falsely calumniated us."

On the subject of justification, he says, "God manifested His love towards us in the sending of His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world, who gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour; having made peace through the blood of His cross, that He might reconcile us unto Himself, and by the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot unto God, and suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God. Foras-

Respecting the offering of Christ, he says, "In short I say that Jesus Christ was a sacrifice for sin, that he was set forth to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, to declare God's righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, &c. to all that repented and had faith in his Son. Therein the love of God appeared, that he declared his good-will thereby to be reconciled; Christ bearing away the sins that are past, as the scape-goat did of old, not excluding inward work, for till that is begun, none can be benefited; though it is not the work, but God's free love that remits and blot out; of which the death of Christ and his sacrificing himself was a most certain declaration and confirmation." See Letter, page 165, Vol. i. Fol. ed.

much as all who have come to man's estate, (the man Jesus only excepted,) have sinned, therefore all have need of this Saviour, to remove the wrath of God from them due to their offences; in this respect He is truly said to have borne the iniquities of us all in His body on the tree, and therefore is the only Mediator, having qualified the wrath of God towards us, so that our former sins stand not in our way, being by virtue of His most satisfactory sacrifice removed and pardoned. Neither do we think that remission of sins is to be expected, sought or obtained, any other way, or by any works or sacrifice whatsoever. So then, Christ by his death and sufferings hath reconciled us to God, even while we are enemies; that is, He offers reconciliation to us; we are put into a capacity of being reconciled: God is willing to forgive us our iniquities and to accept us, as is well expressed by the apostle; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath put in us the word of reconciliation:" intimating, that the wrath of God being removed by the obedience of Christ Jesus, He is willing to be reconciled unto them, and ready to remit the sins that are past, if they repent."

Edward Burrough, in a tract entitled "A Declaration of our Faith," says: "Concerning Christ we believe, that He is one with the Father and was with Him before the world was; and what the Father worketh it is by the Son; for He is the arm of God's salvation, and the very power and wisdom of the Creator; and was, and is, and is to come, without beginning or end. And we believe that all the prophets gave testimony of Him, and that He was made manifest in Judea and Jerusalem, and did the work of the Father, and was persecuted of the Jews, and was crucified by His enemies, and that He was buried and rose again, according to the Scriptures. And we believe He is now ascended on high and exalted at the right hand of the Father for evermore; and that He is glorified with the same glory that He had before the world was, and that even the same that came down from heaven is ascended up to heaven, and the same that descended is He that ascended." In a reply which he wrote to some malicious insinuations, he further asserts—"Jesus Christ died and rose again, and ascended according to the Scriptures, this we do believe: And Christ was and is the substance, the end of all signs and examples, and yet was He an example to the saints; and the apostle exhorted to walk as they had Christ for an example; and while He was in the world He did and spoke and acted many things as parables, signs and examples, the substance of which is to be received in the saints, and known by them through the Spirit; and we believe the saints are justified

by Christ, and through faith in Him, which was, and is, and is to come, who is blessed for ever, and none are justified by His death and suffering and blood without them, but who witness Christ within them."

Joseph Phipps, in a work entitled "The Original and Present State of Man," written in the year 1773, expresses himself in these words: "The Evangelist shows first what the Word, Christ, was in Himself, and asserts He was God; and next what He was in and to the world. First, He was the Creator of all things; and, second, the Light of men; and both these He was in the beginning, or early part of time, to this creation, four thousand years before his coming in the flesh.—In the beginning was the Word. This Divine Word had no beginning. It was no part of the creation. All created things were made by Him, and called from inexistence into being; but the Word is without beginning or end of days. The Word inexpressible by words, and incomprehensible by thoughts and imaginations. The Orthos Logos or Right Reason, infinite in wisdom, goodness and power, from the beginning, issuing forth, and acting in the work of creation and providence, and also from the time of the fall, in mediation and regeneration. As man was the only part of this lower creation designed for immortality, the favours he then received were answerable to the high purpose of his Maker in creating him. The creating and conserving Word immediately became his illuminator and quickener. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life, *and the life was the light of men.*"

"After man's transgression and defection from this Divine Light and Life, this gracious Word astonishingly condescended to offer Himself to repair the breach, by determining, in due time, to take the nature of man upon Him, and to give it up to excruciating pains and the death of the cross, as a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Hereby He showed the greatness of divine love and mercy to poor helpless man, and also by then immediately renewing, and thence forward continuing to afford, a manifestation of His light to man in his fallen estate. For before his incarnation, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not."

"The Evangelist having spoken of Him, as the universal illuminating, effective Word, he comes to speak of His incarnation, saying, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." We are not here to understand, that the sovereign Word or Spirit was transubstantiated into flesh, but that for man's redemption, He took the nature of man upon Him

and appeared amongst men as a man, and undoubtedly in the eyes of most, seemed not more than man; but, saith His enlightened follower, “and we beheld His glory, (had a sense of His Divinity as well as a sight of His humanity,) the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,” (the only One of his own essence and eternity,) “full of grace and truth—and of His *fulness* have all we received, and grace for grace.”

Wm. Sewell, in his History of the Quakers, states, that in the year 1693, being charged with doctrines which they had never owned, they published their faith under the title of “The Christian Doctrines and Society of the People called Quakers cleared, &c.” from which the following is extracted—“We do, in the fear of God, and in simplicity and plainness of his truth received, solemnly and sincerely declare what our Christian belief and profession has been, and still is, in respect to Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, his suffering, death, resurrection, glory, light, power, &c. We sincerely profess faith in God by His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, as being our light and life, our only way to the Father, and also our only Mediator and Advocate with the Father. That God created all things; He made the worlds by his Son Jesus Christ, He being that powerful and living Word of God by whom all things were made: and that the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit are one, in divine being inseparable; one true, living and eternal God, blessed for ever.”

“That this Word, or Son of God, in the fulness of time took flesh, became perfect man: according to the flesh descended and came of the seed of Abraham and David, but was miraculously conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. And also further declared powerfully, to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of sanctification by the resurrection from the dead.”

“That in the Word or Son of God was life, and the same life was the light of men, and that He was that true light which enlightens every man coming into the world; and therefore that men are to believe in the light, that they may become children of the light: hereby we believe in Christ the Son of God, as He is the light and life within us, and wherein we must needs have sincere respect and honour to and belief in Christ, as in His own unapproachable and incomprehensible glory and fulness, as He is the fountain of life and light, and giver thereof unto us; Christ as in Himself and as in us being not divided.”

“That as man, Christ died for our sins, rose again, and was received up into glory in the heavens. He having in his dying for all, been that one great universal offering and sacrifice for peace, atonement and reconciliation between God and

man, and he is the propitiation, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world. We were reconciled by his death, but saved by his life."

"That Jesus Christ sitteth at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, yet is He our king, high priest and prophet in his church, a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. He is Intercessor and Advocate with the Father in heaven, and there appearing in the presence of God for us, being touched with the feeling of our infirmities, sufferings and sorrows. And also by His spirit in our hearts, He maketh intercession according to the will of God, crying Abba Father. For any whom God hath gifted and called sincerely to preach faith in the same Christ, both as within and without us, cannot be to preach two Christs, but one and the same Lord Jesus Christ, having respect to those degrees of our spiritual knowledge of Christ Jesus in us and to his own unspeakable fulness and glory as in Himself, in His own entire being, wherein Christ himself, and the least measure of his light or life as in us or in mankind, are not divided nor separable, no more than the sun is from its light. And as he ascended far above all heavens that He might fill all things, His fulness cannot be comprehended or contained in any finite creature, but in some measure known and experienced in us as we are capable to receive the same, as of His fulness we have received grace for grace. Christ our Mediator received the spirit not by measure but in fulness, but to every one of us is given grace according to the measure of his gift."

"We sincerely confess and believe that divine honour and worship is due to the Son of God, and that He is in true faith to be prayed unto, and the name of the Lord Jesus called upon as the primitive Christians did, because of the glorious union or oneness of the Father and the Son, and that we cannot acceptably offer up prayers and praises to God, nor receive a gracious answer or blessing from God, but in and through His dear Son Jesus Christ."

The following are extracts from epistles issued at different times by the Yearly Meeting of Friends in London.

1728. "Inasmuch as the Holy Scriptures are the external means of conveying and preserving to us an account of the things most surely to be believed, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh, and the fulfilling of the prophecies relating thereto; we therefore recommend to all Friends, especially elders in the church and masters of families, that they would both by example and advice impress on the minds of the younger, a reverent esteem of those sacred writings, and advise them to a frequent reading, and meditating

therein; and that you would at proper seasons, give the youth to understand that the same good experience of the work of sanctification, through the operation of the Spirit of God, which the Holy Scriptures plentifully bear testimony to, is to be witnessed by believers in all generations, as well as by those in the first ages of Christianity. And this we recommend as the most effectual means for begetting and establishing in their minds a firm belief of the Christian doctrine in general, as well as the necessity of the help of the operations of the Holy Spirit of God in the hearts of men in particular, contained in that most excellent book the Bible; and for preserving them from being defiled with the many pernicious notions and principles, contrary to such sound doctrine, which are at this time industriously dispersed in this nation to the reproach of the Christian profession in general."

1732. "Dear friends, we tenderly and earnestly advise and exhort all parents and masters of families, that they exert themselves in the wisdom of God, and in the strength of His love, to instruct their children and families in the doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion, contained in the Holy Scriptures; and that they excite them to a diligent reading of those Sacred Writings; which plainly set forth the miraculous conception, birth, holy life, wonderful works, blessed example, meritorious death and glorious resurrection, ascension, and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: and to educate their children in the belief of those important truths, as well as in the belief of the inward manifestation and operation of the Spirit of God on their own minds; that they may reap the benefit and advantage thereof for their own peace and everlasting happiness, which is infinitely preferable to all other considerations. We therefore exhort in the most earnest manner, that all be very careful in this respect, a neglect herein being in our judgment very blame-worthy."

1736. "And, dear friends, in order that as we have received Christ, so we may walk in Him in all holiness and godliness of conversation, we earnestly exhort that ye hold fast the profession of the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ without wavering; both in respect to His outward coming in the flesh, His sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, mediation and intercession at the right hand of the Father; and to the inward manifestation of His Grace and Holy Spirit in our hearts, powerfully working in the soul of man, to the subduing every evil affection and lust, and to the purifying of our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God: and that through the virtue and efficacy of this most holy faith, ye may become strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

1750. "We earnestly exhort and entreat you to abide

steadfast in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to take heed lest any of you be seduced by the craft and subtlety of designing men, some of whom have published books tending to alienate the minds of men from the true and saving faith, and to lead them to a disesteem of the Holy Scriptures and the principles of the Christian religion therein contained."

1787. "Finally, brethren, in the words of the Apostle, "we beseech you, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind. But as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ; for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

In an address of the meetings of the same Religious Society in Philadelphia to their members issued in 1795, and signed on their behalf by James Pemberton, John Elliott, John Parrish, William Savery, Daniel Drinker and Jonathan Evans, after alluding to the lamentable increase of libertinism and infidelity, they impressively exhort all to guard against its baneful influence in these words: "And here let us caution all to beware how they suffer their minds to be drawn away by the vain philosophy of this world, from the glorious, divine, and most consolatory faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Mediator and Redeemer. Many have been the attempts of men of corrupt minds, by artful publications and fallacious arguments, to deceive the unguarded, and rob them of that inestimable treasure, the hope of salvation through the Son and Sent of God; these deluded agents of the enemy of your souls' peace, would involve you in the deepest misery and distress if given place to: we beseech you therefore wisely to reject, and bear at all times a faithful testimony against their insinuations."

The foregoing extracts may be sufficient to hold up an explicit testimony to the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and against a spirit of infidelity and licentious speculation, which, undervaluing the Holy Scriptures, treats and handles the sacred, mysterious truths which they contain, as the fictions of imposture, or the common subjects of philosophic research. Whilst we are declaring our faith with respect to the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, and the benefits thereby derived to mankind, and also to His glorification at the right hand of the Father, with that glory which He had before the world began, it is likewise essentially important that

we believe in and receive him in his inward and spiritual appearance to the soul, by which he enlightens the understanding, and purifies the heart from every defilement. Without this we are incapable of bearing a true testimony to the superior excellence of the gospel dispensation, may give its enemies an opportunity to defame it, and prove ourselves to be like the foolish builders upon the sand, to whom our blessed Redeemer compared those who heard his sayings and did them not. But those who receive and obey His spirit, build upon an immutable foundation, the Rock of Ages, and bring forth those fruits which adorn the doctrines of the gospel, and thus become partakers of the fulness of its blessing, the remission of sins through the offering of Christ, and "the riches of the mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ within, the hope of glory."

The preceding Christian doctrines attested under the peaceful prospect of a glorious immortality.

1675. Joseph Briggins, a virtuous youth of thirteen years old, in prayer a little before death, said, "Oh keep them that know thee sure and steadfast upon thy holy foundation Christ Jesus my king, whose appearance is very glorious, and of his government no end is to be." Again—"There are many ways and baptisms in the world, but oh thou pure, holy, holy One, we have known thy spiritual baptism into Christ Jesus, my Lord, by whom the living water we have known and felt—it is indeed exceeding pure, by which we have been washed from all our sins. Oh my King, thou wast slain, and by the virtue of thy pure blood we have this given."

1705. Ann Camm, a woman of great religious experience, testified, "I bless the Lord I am prepared for my change; I am full of assurance of eternal salvation and a crown of glory, through my dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom God the Father has sent to bless me, with many more, by turning us from the evil of our ways into the just man's path." After praying the Lord to help her through the agony of death, she said, "Oh my God, thou hast not forsaken me, blessed be thy name for ever; oh my blessed Lord and Saviour, that suffered for me and all mankind great pains in thy holy body upon the cross, remember me thy poor handmaid, in this my great bodily affliction; my trust is in thee, my hope is only in thee my dear Lord—come quickly, receive my soul to thee."

1727. Thomas Wilson, of Ireland, an eminent minister of the gospel, who had travelled much in his Master's cause, said, "The Lord's goodness fills my heart, which gives me an evidence and assurance of my everlasting peace in His kingdom with my ancient friends, who are gone before me, with whom

comfort in the work of the gospel,"—And "although the Lord hath made me serviceable in His hand, what I trust in is the mercy of God in Jesus Christ."

1727. Thomas Thompson, of Saffron Walden, preached freely and travelled much in the promotion of religion. A few days before his death he expressed himself thus:—"To them that inquire what end I make, let them know I die in the faith that saves, and triumphs over death and hell, through the mercy and goodness of God, finding no cloud in my way: but perfect peace with God through Jesus Christ, the presence of whose glory is with me; and I feel the comforts of his spirit attending me every day; I never felt the like comfort before. O glory, glory to thy divine name and power, thou infinite Fountain of light and immortality, my soul blesses thee, in the sense of that eternal Word and Wisdom that was in thy bosom from all eternity; that intellectual Light which shone everlastingly, and will be a glory and crown to all them that believe and walk therein, and in the faith of that I live and die."

1772. Samuel Fothergill, after a course of thirty-six years' labour in the Lord's vineyard, expressed himself to the following effect: "There is one thing which, as an arm underneath, bears up and supports; and though the rolling tempestuous billows surround, yet my head is kept above them, and my feet are firmly established.—Death has no terrors, nor will the grave have any victory—My soul triumphs over death, hell, and the grave.—I should be glad if an easy channel could be found to inform the Yearly Meeting, that as I have lived, so I shall close, with the most unshaken assurance, that we have not followed cunningly devised fables, but the pure, living, eternal substance."

1772. John Woolman attained to great redemption from the spirit and customs of the world. Among many other weighty expressions which he uttered, were the following: "I sorrow not, though I have had some painful conflicts; but now they seem over, and matters all settled: and I look at the face of my dear Redeemer, for sweet is his voice and his countenance comely."—"My dependence is in the Lord Jesus Christ, who I trust will forgive my sins, which is all I hope for; if it be his will to raise up this body again, I am content, and if to die, I am resigned."

1799. Samuel Emlen, who was eminently endowed with spiritual gifts, manifested the trust of his mind in his last sickness, by saying—"I have a comfortable hope that my spirit will be reposed in the bosom of Jesus." To his friends who were with him—"Remember," said he, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should

remain." His last words were "Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

1804. William Savery, having been in the ministry twenty-four years, speaking of that weighty service, said, "I thought I was strong for the work, but now I am a child brought back to my horn book; and have nothing to trust to but the mercy of God through Christ my Saviour." The last words which he is recollected to have said, were, with uplifted hands, "Glory to God."

1807. Job Thomas, who was permitted to have a very remarkable foretaste of the glory of departed spirits, expressed himself thus: "My hope is in the mercy of Him, who has washed me in the fountain set open for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; not through my own merits, but through the merits of the crucified Immanuel, who died for the sins of all mankind. And you who have to remain a little after me, give the praise, the reverence, and the honour to Him; and supplicate day and night before His throne, until you have certain knowledge that you have been baptized with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which was sealed by the blood of the everlasting covenant."

1809. James Pemberton in his last sickness, remarked after a fainting fit, how awful it was to be on the verge of eternity. "But," continued he, "we have a Mediator, an Intercessor. My mind has for some time past been unusually impressed with the vast importance of the Redeemer's mediation; I have never before seen it with the same clearness. I am free from pain of body or mind. The prospect of my change is awful, but after all, I have nothing to trust to but the merits of my Redeemer." To Thomas Scattergood he said, "I am thankful that through divine mercy, I feel an evidence within me that I am not cast off." Speaking of the mediatorship of the Son, he said, "It is a great mercy, that God in his wisdom has appointed such wonderful means for the redemption of mankind." "We have a high priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities." "Not such an high priest as is ordained by man, but a high priest who is really touched with a feeling of our infirmities. This mediation of the Son, with the Father, is a great mystery." In the following week he said, "As I draw nearer my close, I find the tormenting fear of death taken away through the intercession of the great Mediator between God and man. I am very low; but not so low but I can yet commemorate the incomprehensible mercies of an all-gracious God." And to a particular friend, "O that I had strength, that I had the strength of an angel, that I might declare the goodness of the Lord to me; but—eternity's too short to utter all his praise."

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST,

EXEMPLIFIED

IN THE

CONSTANCY OF THE MARTYRS.



PHILADELPHIA:

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FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, &c.

AMONG the blessings of the present day, is the free enjoyment of our religious rights. Their value is not fully appreciated, nor do we often advert to the privations and bitter sufferings, which conscientious persons in different ages endured, in advocating principles and doctrines now openly avowed without danger of persecution. Our liberty has been the purchase of the fidelity and undaunted perseverance of our predecessors, many of whom have suffered martyrdom in defence of their faith. But whilst we believe that the government of conscience is the sole prerogative of Him who created us, let us be on our guard, lest in the exercise of our moral rights, we are not imperceptibly carried into a species of libertinism in religious opinion, originating in pride, and tending to the dark mazes of infidelity. Let us not hastily receive the speculations of the theorist, because they may bear the character of novelty, nor too readily join with those fallacious pretences to more expanded views of the Christian religion, which would remove the salutary restraints produced by the terrors which the gospel holds up to the wicked, or destroy the faith and hope of the righteous in the benefits of the incarnation and mediation of the Son and Sent of God, our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. This tract is designed to present the reader with a few instances of those faithful followers of the Lamb, whose lot it was to suffer death for His cause, and although in some things of a merely outward nature they did not see eye to eye, yet being obedient to the degree of light with which they were furnished, they bore an invariable testimony to the true foundation; they unequivocally declared that their faith and trust were fixed upon Christ Jesus, who had purchased them with His blood, and through whom only they looked for everlasting salvation.

Victor was the descendant of a good family residing at Marseilles in the beginning of the fourth century. He spent much of his time in visiting the sick, and comforting the afflicted. His estate he expended in relieving the distresses of poor Christians, esteeming wealth of little use unless subservient to works of charity, and if employed otherwise a bane to mankind. During the tenth persecution under the Roman emperors, he was seized and carried before the Prefect who advised him to embrace paganism, and not to forfeit the favour of his prince on account of a dead man, as he styled Christ. He replied, "that he preferred the services of that dead man, who was in reality the Son of God, and was risen from the

grave, to all the advantages he could receive from the emperor's favour; that he was a soldier of Christ, and would therefore take care that the post he held under an earthly prince, should never interfere with his duty to the King of Heaven." Refusing to sacrifice to the Roman idols, he was ordered to be bound, and dragged through the streets, where he was treated with cruelty and indignity by the enraged populace. Remaining inflexible, his courage was deemed obstinacy, and his Christian confidence irrational; to which he remarked, "that the ready disposition of the disciples of Christ to undergo any sufferings on that score, and the joy with which they met the most ignominious and painful deaths, were a sufficient proof of their assurance of the object of their hope."

Maximus, governor of Celicia, being at Tarsus, three persons were brought before him by a military officer.—Tarachus, being the eldest and first in rank, was addressed first, and asked what he was: the prisoner replied, "a Christian." Upon being interrogated the second time in a similar manner, and making the same reply, the governor advised him to sacrifice to the gods, as the only way to promotion, riches and honour. To this Tarachus replied, that avarice was a sin, and gold itself an idol as abominable as any other. As for promotion, he desired it not, as he could not in conscience accept any post which would subject him to pay adoration to idols; and with regard to honours, he desired no greater than the honourable title of Christian. For the boldness of his speech he was scourged, loaded with chains and thrown into a dungeon.

Maximus then demanded of Probus his name—he boldly answered, the most valuable name he could boast of was that of Christian; but the usual appellation by which he was distinguished, was Probus; his father was a Thracian, and that he was born at Sida in Pamphylia. The governor replied, "your name of Christian will be of little service to you; sacrifice to the gods, engage my friendship and the emperor's favour." In answer to which Probus declared, "that as he had relinquished a considerable fortune to become a soldier of Christ, it might appear evident that he neither cared for his friendship, nor the emperor's favour." He was ordered to be scourged and committed to prison.

Andronichus was next brought up, and replying to the usual question as his friends had done, received a like punishment. After they had lain in jail several days they underwent a second examination, but without relaxing their firm adherence to the profession of the Christian faith. Andronichus, being separately brought before the governor, he attempted to deceive him by pretending that his companions had repented, and owned the heathen gods. To this the prisoner replied;

“lay not, O governor, such a weakness to the charge of those who have appeared here before me in this cause, nor imagine it to be in your power to shake my fixed resolution with artful speeches. I cannot believe they have renounced their hope in our God; nor will I ever fall short of them in faith and dependance upon our common Saviour; fulfil your threats, and employ every cruel art in your power upon me; I am prepared to bear it for the sake of Christ.”—After suffering repeated cruelties they were executed by the governor’s orders, on the 11th of October, A. D. 303.

In the course of the same persecution, Philip, bishop of Heraclea, who had maintained the character of an upright Christian, was advised to secrete himself, in order to avoid the fury of the storm; but he reprov’d his counsellors, telling them that death had no terrors for the virtuous. An officer being employed to shut up their worship houses in Heraclea, Philip endeavoured to convince him, that the closing up of buildings made by hands, could not destroy Christianity, while the living temples of the Lord remained; for the true faith consisted not in the places where God is adored, but in the hearts of those who adore him. Being however denied entrance where he used to preach, Philip took up his station at the door, and there exhorted the people to patience and perseverance. His constancy caused him to be seized and carried before the governor, who severely reprimanded him, and addressed him with these words, “bring all the vessels used in your worship, and the Scriptures which you read and teach the people, and surrender them to me, before you are forced thereto by tortures.”—“If,” replied the bishop, “you take any pleasure in seeing us suffer, we are prepared for the worst you can do. This infirm body is in your power, use it as you please. The vessels shall be delivered up, for God is not honoured by gold and silver, but by the fear of his power; the ornaments of the souls of His servants are more pleasing to Him than the decorations of churches; but as to the sacred books, it is neither proper for me to part with them, nor for you to receive them.” This answer so much incensed the governor that he directed him to be tortured. Philip was afterwards taken to the market place, and commanded to sacrifice to the Roman deities; when he observed, “alas! how unhappy are you, who are thus grossly mistaken in the nature of the Deity, and so ignorant in the truth as to worship your own workmanship; you are unacquainted with the Divinity of Christ, which is incomprehensible to human capacities.” He was then dragged by the feet through the streets, severely scourged, and again brought before the governor, who charged him with obstinate rashness in disobeying the imperial decree; but he boldly replied, “my

present behaviour is not the effect of rashness, but proceeds from my love and fear of God, who made the world, and who will judge the living and the dead, whose commands I dare not transgress." Sentence of death was passed upon him, and he finished his course in the flames, singing praises to God.

Julitta, of Cappadocia, was a lady of distinguished talents, great virtue and uncommon courage. She suffered martyrdom for her firm attachment to the Christian religion, manifested in preferring the loss of her estate and life, to the relinquishment of her faith. In a lawsuit with a person who had unjustly possessed himself of a considerable part of her estate, the defendant urged that the law would not suffer him to engage at that bar with one of a different religion; so that he could not proceed in his defence unless his opponent would renounce Christianity. The judge coinciding therewith, directed the parties to offer incense to their gods, if they expected to receive the benefit of the laws. The usurper immediately complied; but Julitta evinced that her faith was more dear to her than property, or life itself. "No," said she, "my affection to what is undoubtedly my own, shall never hinder me from sacrificing my all, and even my life if required, rather than violate my fidelity to my God and Saviour."

John Huss, having adopted the doctrines of Wickliffe, openly advocated them, and boldly declared against the vices and corruptions of the church. In the year 1414, a general council assembled at Constance in Germany, which he was summoned to attend. Towards the latter part of the year he set out on his journey, accompanied by two noblemen, his sincere friends and firm disciples, receiving many marks of distinguished respect in the towns through which he passed. As soon as Huss arrived at Constance he took lodgings in a remote part of the city; and although he had been assured of a safe conduct, when it was known he was there, he was immediately arrested and committed prisoner to a chamber in the palace. It was soon perceived that his destruction was determined upon. After an examination he was committed to a filthy prison, laden with fetters, and at night fastened by his hands to a ring in the wall of the jail. A resolution was formed to burn him as a heretic, if he would not retract, which the united intercessions of the nobility of Poland and Bohemia for his release were insufficient to avert. Exertions were used to induce him to recant. He declared that he was not conscious of having promulgated erroneous doctrines, but that he stood open to conviction by arguments founded upon the Holy Scriptures. Every attempt to prevail upon him to abjure, having failed, his books were condemned, and he was declared a heretic, and delivered to the secular power. Huss heard his sentence with

out the least emotion. At the close of it he kneeled, and with the magnanimity of a true Christian, prayed for his persecutors; "May thy infinite mercy, O my God, pardon this injustice of my enemies. Thou knowest the injustice of my accusations; how deformed with crimes I have been represented, how I have been oppressed with worthless witnesses and a false condemnation, yet oh my God, let that mercy of thine which no tongue can express, prevail with thee not to avenge my wrongs."

Two days after he was led to the suburbs of the city, to be burnt. On his arrival at the place of execution he fell on his knees, sung several portions of psalms, and looking steadfastly towards heaven, repeated these words: "into thy hands, O Lord, do I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O most good and faithful God." When the chain was put round him at the stake, with a smiling countenance he said, "My Lord Jesus Christ was bound with a harder chain than this for my sake, and why then should I be ashamed of this old rusty one?" With the faggots piled up to his neck, he was called upon to recant; "no," replied Huss, "I never preached any doctrine of an evil tendency, and what I taught with my lips I now seal with my blood."

Jerome, of Prague, who was the companion of John Huss in life and doctrine, soon followed him to the stake, discovering the same intrepidity in defence of his faith. When his trial was concluded, he was in the usual style delivered over to the secular power. A paper cap with painted figures was prepared for him, which being placed upon his head, he said, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, when he suffered death for me, a most miserable sinner, did wear a crown of thorns upon his head, and I, for his sake, will wear this cap." A respite of two days was allowed him, in the hope that he would recant, and which exertions were made to effect. But Jerome remained inexorable, and suffered death with the most exemplary fortitude. In going to the place of execution he sung several hymns, and on reaching the spot, kneeled and prayed fervently. He embraced the stake with cheerfulness, and when the executioner went behind him to set fire to the faggots, he said, "come here and kindle it before my eyes; for if I had been afraid of it, I had not come to this place, having had so many opportunities to escape." The fire being kindled, he sung a hymn, but was soon interrupted by the flames, and the last words he was heard to pronounce were, "This soul in flames, I offer, Christ, to thee!"

John Lambert, of Norfolk, a person who was zealous in spreading the doctrines of the Protestants, having been compelled to defend his opinions before the Bishops, appealed

from them to King Henry the VIIIth. On the day appointed for his trial, the king ascended his throne, accompanied by his bishops and nobles, and the principal point in dispute being stated, Lambert freely answered their arguments. After a conference which lasted several hours, in which Lambert, by his replies, confuted and exasperated the king and bishops, so that they silenced him, the king asked him, "what sayest thou after all these labours and reasons of these learned men? art thou yet satisfied? wilt thou live or die? thou hast yet free choice? Lambert, commending his soul into the hands of his Maker, and submitting his body to the clemency of the king, the king told him, "if you do commit yourself unto my judgment, you must die, for I will not be a patron to heretics;" and ordered the sentence of death to be read against him. In the course of a short time he was taken to Smithfield and burnt. Whilst the flames were raging around him, he cried out to the people in these words, "*none but Christ, none but Christ,*" evidencing in this hour of awful trial, that no other foundation could sustain the soul and furnish the hope of everlasting salvation.

John Philpot, a firm and steady believer, having undergone repeated examinations before some of queen Mary's bishops, respecting his religious opinions, boldly asserted them in opposition to the prevailing errors of that time, for which he was pronounced a heretic, and committed to close confinement in Newgate prison. He went to the jail with cheerfulness, saying to those about him, "Ah good people, blessed be God for this day." During his imprisonment he wrote numerous consolatory and instructive epistles to his friends, encouraging them steadfastly to keep the faith which was once delivered to the saints. To one he says, "The world wondereth how we can be merry in such extreme misery, but our God is omnipotent, who turneth misery into felicity. Believe me there is no such joy in the world as the people of Christ have under the cross. I speak by experience, therefore believe me, and fear nothing that the world can do unto you. What greater glory can there be, than to be in conformity to Christ? which afflictions do work in us. God open our eyes to see more and more his glory in the cross of Jesus Christ, and make us worthy partakers of the same. All the tribulations of the world are not worthy of the eternal weight of glory which is prepared for them that do with patience abide the cross; wherefore let us be strong with the strength of him that is able to make us strong. Christ whom we would pretend to have put upon us is the strength of God, and how can they be weak where Christ is? Embrace that which is perfect, and joyfully look for the coming and cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ increase in your godly heart the faith of the gospel, which is your eter-

nal inheritance, and the Holy Ghost comfort your spirit with all spiritual consolation to the day of the Lord—Amen.”

Philpot having been condemned to suffer death, after several months confinement, was called upon by the deputy sheriff one evening while at supper, and requested to make ready, for the next day he should be burned at the stake. He answered, “I am ready; God grant me strength and a joyful resurrection.” In the morning the sheriffs conducted him to the place of execution. On coming to the stake he kissed it, and said, “Shall I disdain to suffer at this stake, seeing my Redeemer did not refuse to suffer the most vile death upon the cross for me?” He repeated several psalms, prayed, and when he had given money to the officers who had served him, they bound him to the stake, where like a lamb he yielded his soul into the hands of his faithful Creator.

About the commencement of the year 1556, seven persons suffered martyrdom together at Smithfield, submitting to the tortures of death by fire, in preference to abandoning their faith in Christ, the rock of their salvation, which was more precious to them than all the enjoyments of this life. Thomas Whittle, one of the number, exhorted his friends to perseverance by his letters written during his confinement, from which the following are extracts: .viz. “I cannot but praise God most earnestly when I hear of your constancy in the faith, and joy in the cross of Christ, which you now bear and suffer, together with many other good members of Christ, which is a token that by Christ you are counted worthy of the kingdom of God. This cross that we now bear hath been common to all the faithful from Abel hitherto, and shall be to the end; because the devil having great wrath against God and his Christ, cannot abide that he should for his manifold mercies be lauded and magnified, and Christ to be taken and believed upon for our only sufficient Redeemer, Saviour, and Advocate: and therefore because we will not deny Christ, nor dissemble with our faith, but openly profess the same before the world, he seeketh by all means to stir up his wicked members to persecute and kill the bodies of the true Christians—wherefore be of good comfort through Jesus Christ, for He that is in us is stronger than he that is in the world—Oh the incomparable good things and heavenly treasures, laid up for us in heaven by Jesus Christ, for the obtaining whereof we ought to set light by all temporal grief and transitory afflictions—Oh the bottomless mercy of God towards us miserable sinners! may he vouchsafe to plant in my heart true repentance and faith, to the obtaining of the remission of all my sins in the mercies of God and merits of Christ his Son. The same faith for which Abraham was accounted just and Mary blessed, whereby also just men live, the

Lord God our loving Father increase and establish in you and me, to the obtaining of eternal life in our alone and sweet Saviour Jesus Christ—Amen.”

Walter Mill was burnt at Edinburgh in 1558. He was 82 years of age, and being very infirm, it was supposed he could scarcely be heard by the surrounding spectators. However, at the place of execution he expressed his religious sentiments with such courage and composure as to astonish even his enemies. When fastened to the stake and the fire kindled, he addressed them as follows: “The cause why I suffer this day is not for any crime, (though I acknowledge myself a miserable sinner,) but only for the defence of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ; and I praise God who hath called me by his mercy, to seal the truth with my life, which, as I received it from him, so I willingly offer it up to his glory. Therefore, as you would escape eternal death, be no longer seduced by the lies of the sect of Antichrist; but depend solely on Jesus Christ and His mercy, that you may be delivered from condemnation.”

Cuthbert Symson was a faithful and zealous servant of Christ, labouring diligently to guard those with whom he was connected in religious fellowship, from the errors which had overtaken many of the professors of Christianity. The travail, patience, and fidelity which he exhibited, were worthy of imitation. Such a pastor in the time of persecution could not long escape the vigilance of his enemies. He was summoned before the Constable of the tower of London and the Recorder, and refusing to reply to questions which they addressed to him, he was racked several times. A few weeks afterwards he was brought before the high priest, who denounced a curse against him “for bearing witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Bonner, although his implacable persecutor, was compelled to acknowledge that “he was a man of the greatest patience that ever came before him.” He was burnt at Smithfield in company with two others in the year 1558. Writing an account of his imprisonment and tortures, he concludes with these words: “And thus I commend you unto God and to the word of His grace, with all them that unfeignedly call upon the name of Jesus, desiring God of his endless mercy, through the merits of his dear Son Jesus Christ, to bring us all to his everlasting kingdom—Amen.”

John Hullier was imprisoned in Cambridge for his religious principles. He was frequently examined by the bishop and other ecclesiastical functionaries, but without effecting any change in his views, and was accordingly condemned to death as a heretic. His congregation was an object of concern during his confinement, to whom he wrote several epistles, encouraging them to continue in one spirit, labouring to main-

tain the faith of the gospel, without fearing the trials they were exposed to, knowing that it was not only given to them "to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake." The day arriving for his martyrdom, he left his prison, and at the stake desired the people to pray for him, and was answered, "the Lord strengthen thee." Seating himself on a stool, to have his hose taken off, he again desired them to pray for him, and also to bear witness that he died in the right faith, and that he would seal it with his blood, certifying to them, that he died in a just cause, and for the testimony of the truth, and that there was no other rock but Jesus Christ to build upon, under whose banner he fought, and whose soldier he was. Placed in a pitch barrel, surrounded with reed and wood, to which the fire was applied, when it was supposed his devoted soul had taken its flight to the realms of eternal day, he suddenly uttered these words: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

John Careless, of Coventry, having been examined in relation to the doctrines he held, which were in opposition to the dogmas of the Romish church, was confined in jail two years, which he endured with patience under the prospect of terminating his life at the stake, as many of his fellow-believers had already done. He corresponded by letters with John Philpot and others, in which they mutually excited one another to perseverance, and a steady reliance on that immutable rock upon which they had built, the sure support of the righteous in all ages. He was released by death in prison, and thus escaped the malice of his persecutors. The following are extracts from some of his numerous epistles:—"O what a subtle, crafty, lying serpent is that Satan, our old enemy! that when he seeth that he cannot make us to continue in our wickedness to do him service, would then bring us into doubting and mistrusting of the mercy of God, which is the greatest offence that can be; yea, infidelity is the root and original of all other sins. That house which is not built surely upon the unmoveable rock, will not long stand against the boisterous winds and storms that blow so strongly in these days of trouble. But my dearly beloved brother, blessed be God for you and such as you, who have played the parts of wise builders. You have digged down past the sand of your own natural strength, and beneath the earth of your own worldly wisdom, and are now come to the hard stone and unmoveable rock, Christ, who is your only keeper; and upon Him alone have you built your faith, and most firmly, without doubting, mistrust, or wavering. Therefore neither the storms nor tempests, winds, nor weather, that Satan and all his wily workmen can bring against you, shall ever be able once to move your house, much less to overthrow it; for the Lord God himself, and not man, is the builder thereof, and

has promised to preserve and keep the same for ever. Unto His most merciful defence, therefore, do I heartily commit you and all your good company, desiring Him for His sweet Son Jesus Christ's sake to confirm and strengthen you all, that you may be constant unto the very end, and that after the final victory is once gotten, you may receive the never-fading crown of glory of God's free gift, through his great mercy in Jesus Christ our only Saviour. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, glory, praise, thanks, power, rule and dominion, for ever and evermore—Amen."

William Robinson being condemned to death for his obedience to the Divine requisitions, was taken to the gallows in company with two of his friends under like sentence. When they had taken leave of each other with feelings of tender affection, he cheerfully went up the ladder, and exhorted the spectators to mind the light of Christ in their own hearts, of which he testified, and was now going to seal his testimony with his blood. When the executioner had bound his hands and legs, and placed the rope about his neck, he said, "now ye are made manifest," and as he was about to turn him off, "I suffer for Christ, in whom I live, and for whom I die." In an epistle addressed by him to his friends a few days before his execution, to which he subscribes himself a servant of Jesus Christ, he sets forth the support with which his mind was furnished by the manifestation of his heavenly presence in these words—"I am full of the quickening power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and my lamp is filled with pure oil, so that it gives a clear light and pleasant smell; and I shall enter with my Beloved into eternal peace and rest, wherein I am swallowed up; with the life of it I am filled, and in it I shall depart with everlasting joy in my heart and praises in my mouth, singing hallelujah unto the Lord, who hath redeemed me by his living power. I have fought a good fight, I have kept the holy faith, I have near finished my course, and an eternal crown is laid up for me and all whose feet are shod with righteousness and the preparation of peace."

Marmaduke Stevenson, who was executed at the same time, in the same righteous cause, when he had stept upon the ladder said, "be it known unto you all this day that we suffer not as evil doers, but for conscience' sake," and just as he was about to be executed, "this day shall we be at rest with the Lord." He writes from prison as follows—"The old man must be put off with his deeds, before the new man be put on, Christ Jesus, the Son of the living God, who is the express image of His Father's glory, who is taking his people to Himself out of the jaws of the beast and false prophets, who have long made a prey of them."—"It stands you all in hand to seek after that which

will endure for ever, the pearl of great price, which doth exceed all the treasures of Egypt, for it is durable and will last for ever: the Rock of Ages on which the saints were built, the chief corner stone elect and precious, the sure foundation of many generations, the pillar and ground of truth, Christ the light, the bright and morning star, the sun of righteousness which is now arisen with healing in his wings."

William Leddra suffered martyrdom in a few months after, for his faithfulness to the leadings of his Lord and Master, evincing the steadfastness of his faith by the meekness with which he treated his persecutors, and the serenity and composure with which he met death. At the foot of the ladder when he was about to ascend, he took leave of a friend, saying, "all that will be Christ's disciples must take up the cross." To the people who stood near he observed, "for bearing my testimony for the Lord against deceivers and the deceived, am I brought here to suffer." In reply to a stranger who discovered much interest for his life, he said, "friend, know that this day I am willing to offer up my life for the witness of Jesus." As the executioner was putting the halter about his neck, in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, he said, "I commit my righteous cause unto thee, O God," and as he was turned off, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." During his cruel imprisonment, being chained to a log of wood in a very open cold apartment, this patient sufferer, through the extendings of the love of Christ to his heart, was enabled to address his friends with the language of consolation and encouragement, and to bear testimony to his supporting arm in the hour of great extremity. "I testify," says he, "in the fear of the Lord God, that the noise of the whip on my back, all the imprisonment and banishing on pain of death, and the loud threatening of the halter did no more affright me, through the strength of the power of God in me, than if they had threatened to have bound a spider's web to my finger: which makes me say with unfeigned lips, wait upon the Lord, oh my soul, for ever, who hath made known unto me His loving kindness, when I even thirsted for Him; and kept my feet upon the rock, whilst the raging waves of the sea went over my back; whilst for the truth and cause of God's people, I have been freely offered up, and am not at all straitened to be baptized for the dead, whether into death or otherwise, following His example who laid down His life for His enemies. Wherefore my spirit waits and worships at the feet of Immanuel, unto whom I commit my cause who may work my body's deliverance, if not, yet the freedom, peace, joy, and patience, which in the midst of trouble I have enjoyed, and I believe shall continue from him, shall fully satisfy me, for which let my soul and all that is within me praise Him for ever and ever."

A

BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF

WILLIAM DEWSBURY.



PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY THE TRACT ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS,
AND TO BE HAD AT THEIR DEPOSITORY,
No. 84, MULBERRY STREET.

No. 32.

ACCOUNT OF WILLIAM DEWSBURY.

WILLIAM DEWSBURY was born at Allerthorpe, a village in the East-Riding of Yorkshire, early in the seventeenth century. His parents appear to have been religious persons, and their pious care no doubt had the effect of cherishing his early desires after spiritual attainments. His father died when he was only eight years of age; yet he was very sensible of the loss he had sustained, and the impression made upon his mind was not soon effaced. Whilst lamenting with tears this solemn and affecting event, he seemed to hear these words: "Weep for thyself, thy father is well." He had, even before this time, felt the witness in his conscience testifying against many of his actions; and now, he says, "deep sorrow seized on me, and I knew not what to do to get acquainted with the God of my life." Under a sense of his lost and undone condition, he spent many hours which he had formerly devoted to play, in prayer and fasting. He became serious and thoughtful beyond his years, read much in the Holy Scriptures, and in books on religious subjects, but without clearly understanding where God was to be found, though he sought, by verbal supplication, and mourning, to become acquainted with Him.

In vain did he embrace every opportunity afforded him of seeking, through the public teachers and other outward means, a knowledge of that soul-cleansing virtue which he longed to partake of and witness in himself. The carnal views of those whom he addressed were calculated to

administer nothing but disappointment to his mind, and he was not yet sufficiently prepared to understand and know for himself the teachings of the Spirit. When he inquired of these professors concerning Christ, they told him that his coming would be from heaven, casting their eyes upwards towards the firmament. Such a knowledge of the truth as is life eternal was not to be learned from them; for, though holding to the outward, they had lost sight of the inward and spiritual appearance of our Saviour, through which alone a saving belief can ever be attained. He gave strict attention to outward observances, to fastings and to prayers, in imitation of the saints of old; but, as they were not done under the quickenings of the same Spirit, there was no life in them. His soul was in trouble because of sin; and he found that no sacrifices which he could make would avail to satisfy Divine justice, or afford consolation to his own mind. On the contrary, as the child of Adam, partaking of the consequences of the fall, he found himself in a state of alienation from God.

His occupation, until the thirteenth year of his age, was that of a shepherd-boy. His retired situation appears to have been very congenial to his feelings, as it afforded him abundant opportunity for meditation and prayer. Soon after this, when his relations were thinking of putting him apprentice to learn some trade, he heard of a people called Puritans, near Leeds, who were said to walk with greater strictness in religious profession than other people. Such was his hunger and thirst after righteousness, that he had no rest in his spirit, until he had procured a situation in that neighbourhood; for he did not regard the nature of his employment, "if," says he, "I might be among those who feared the living God; and thus become acquainted with the God of my life, who created me for himself."

He was bound apprentice to a cloth-weaver, who proved to be a severe master. He however endured the trials consequent thereon with much patience, although to these were added a large portion of ill health. In the mean time he continued to use all diligence in seeking that knowledge for which his soul longed. He attended assiduously the

preaching of all the chief teachers in the neighbourhood, wrote down their sermons in short-hand, and went afterwards to their houses to converse with them. But he was still disappointed; and found that no outward profession of religion, however high, no knowledge of Scripture, however complete, no attention to religious observances, however strict, could ever cleanse the soul from sin, or restore it to a state of acceptance with God. Whilst under these exercises of mind he made his case known to such as were esteemed the most experienced ministers and professors, querying with them what he should do to be saved. They told him to believe in the name of Christ, and to apply the promises;—but they never counselled him to wait for the revelation of Jesus Christ in his own heart; and it only added to his sorrow to be thus urged to believe in Christ by those from whom he was unable to learn where he was to be found, or how believed in, to the saving of the soul.

He continued subject to these spiritual conflicts for several years. In 1642, when about twenty-one years of age, he entered into the army, believing that in unsheathing the sword in the cause of civil and religious liberty, he was going up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The inconsistency of war with Christianity had not presented itself to his mind, nor the absurdity of any professing to be the servants of Christ whilst they were acting in a manner opposed to his example, his precepts, and his spirit. He continued his inquiries among professors of various denominations, both in England and Scotland, but found none with whom he could unite, for it was an assurance of the love of God to his soul that he sought, which none of them could teach him how to obtain.

Feeling himself no longer at liberty to continue a mode of life in which he was instrumental in the destruction of his fellow-creatures, he left the army. He betook himself to his trade, and whilst his hands were diligently labouring for the support of his body, his mind was inwardly engaged in waiting on the Lord in the way of his judgments, until his own will was brought into subjection to the Divine will. Under a sense that he was by nature in a state of

condemnation, he was brought to cast himself unreservedly upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and to yield up all to his disposal, being forced to acknowledge that if God should condemn him, it would be just; if he should save him, it would be of his free love. In this state, whilst bewailing himself in the depth of his misery, without hope of deliverance by any thing he could do, he was favoured with a clear evidence that there was free redemption laid up for him in the Lord Jesus, and he felt encouraged to wait patiently, even in this sorrowful condition, until the time of his deliverance should come.

Under a deep sense of the depravity and sinfulness of man, he was convinced of the necessity of the great work of regeneration; and this circumstance is especially worthy of notice, connected as it is with the important fact, that he learned this truth from those painful and deep impressions secretly made upon his mind, without the intervention of outward means of religious instruction. The doctrine of the sensible teachings of the Holy Spirit, supported as it is by Scripture and experience, must be acknowledged by all those who have been spiritually instructed in divine things. In the work of regeneration, which is no less a real and effectual, than an inward and mysterious work, an understanding is given, in and by which the "new creature" is enabled to receive the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Not, however, in their own wills, nor at all times when they sit down to search the Holy Scriptures; but as those writings are opened to the mind and brought to their remembrance, by Him who knows their state, what they stand in need of, and what they are able to bear.

In the year 1646, William Dewsbury felt a strong engagement of mind to declare unto others what the Lord had done for his soul; but, whilst revolving the subject within himself, he received a divine intimation to wait until the year 1652. This impression was accompanied with the conviction that at that time there would be more hungering and thirsting after the Lord in the hearts of the people. During this season of waiting, he passed through

many exercises to fit him for the work of the ministry. He also entered into the marriage state, and was careful in this concern, as in all others, to seek that wisdom which is profitable to instruct in all things.

In 1652, himself and wife attended an evening meeting held by George Fox at Balby. They were prepared to acknowledge the truths declared, having been already instructed therein by the Holy Spirit. Now finding a people with whom he could unite, he was soon called upon to labour in the work of the ministry. He was constrained to leave his wife and children, to run to and fro, to declare unto others where the spirit of Christ Jesus, the alone teacher of his people, is to be known, testifying that if they waited in the light for the power of Christ, he would lead them up to fountains of living waters, where their souls would find refreshment in the presence of the Lord; where their bread would be sure, and their waters would never fail.

In his labours and travels in the work of the ministry, he had an abundant share in the sufferings so commonly endured by Friends in those days. Indeed, it appears that he was a prisoner for at least twenty-five years of his life, sometimes being closely and rigorously confined, though at other times enjoying the privilege of living with the jailer, and of attending the meetings of his friends.

In 1654, being arrested at a little village near York, the constable of the place gave him his liberty until the following morning. This respite afforded him an opportunity of sitting down with his friends to wait upon God; an exercise at all times profitable, but never more so than in seasons of straits and difficulties. When the night had been far spent in this engagement, they were surprised by the inhabitants of the town, with the constable at their head; who in a fierce and unchristian manner seized upon William, and, after dragging him for some time about the place, committed him to the custody of two persons, who kept him in an alehouse until the next day. Being committed to York castle, he was confined there until the assizes; when he was released by proclamation, without any semblance of a trial. Apprehended as a criminal,

abused as one whom the law had placed out of its protection, committed to prison on vague, empty, and malicious charges, and detained there three months, without an opportunity of defending his character, he was released in order that his accuser might escape the disgrace which would have resulted from an impartial investigation.

Thus he went on in the way of his duty, never flinching at the frequency of his sufferings and imprisonments, and his labours were abundantly successful, there being "a mighty thirst on every side, great meetings, and many convincements." His great tenderness and watchful care over the flock of Christ led him to address many epistles to them during his long imprisonments. In one written in 1655, after bidding the saints and children to abide with God in their respective callings, he warns them not to run out to speak of religious things beyond *that* of which they have been made witnesses. Indeed, his soul travailed with fervent concern for the preservation of all portions of that society he had been partly instrumental in gathering. He also laboured fervently in many places to restore those who from various causes had separated from the body. "Our God," he says, "in mercy is answering the prayers of his people in bringing again them that have been driven away in the hour of temptation, and now is seeking the lost, and restoring the scattered of the house of Israel." Desiring a friend to write to his tender children and family, he adds, "In the life of my God, I have given them up, with my own life when he shall call for it, a free sacrifice." The following beautiful passage is the termination to one of his epistles: "Watch over one another with a single eye, building up one another in the holy faith, opening your hearts in the free spirit of God to them that are in need, that ye may bear the image of your heavenly Father, who relieveth the hungry, and easeth the burdened, and maketh glad in refreshing his, in the time of need; giving liberally and upbraiding not. Even so be it with you in the name of the Lord, saith your brother and companion in the Lord Jesus Christ."

In an epistle addressed to the wives of those who, in 1664, were condemned to banishment for their faithfulness

in their religious testimonies, he says: "O the tears and breakings of heart that are poured forth before the Lord for your dear husbands, and you, and your tender children! You are families of many prayers, and assuredly shall be known as families of many mercies. Many put their shoulders to help bear the burden of your trials this day!"

In one of his early journeys, he entered into Devonshire with his mind strongly impressed with an apprehension that he should meet with peculiar difficulties and trials in that county. This he realized at Torrington, where he was arrested and brought before the local authorities, who had strongly imbibed the persecuting spirit of the age. They accused him of being a foreigner and a Jesuit, threatened to try him under the new law against vagabonds, and finally read to him the oath of abjuration. This oath, as an obedient servant of Jesus Christ, who said, "Swear not at all," he could not take. "Many times," he says, "I was brought before them to see if they could ensnare me. But in the wisdom of God I stood innocent." A number of the magistrates appear to have been very bitter against him, yet there was a power felt among them, which, though they were unwilling to be subject to, they found themselves unable to control. The mayor told him he should see his face no more until he stood before the judge at Exeter. To this William meekly replied, "Do with me what thou hast power to do, my innocence will plead for me." A mittimus was made out to commit him for trial to the common jail at Exeter; but the magistrates were divided in sentiment, and he was remanded to the prison at Torrington. Here he remained, having nothing but the floor to lie upon, day or night, for three months. At the end of this time he was again brought before them, and he says, "The man that said I should see his face no more until I was before the judge at Exeter, pulled the mittimus in pieces before my face, and said to me, 'Thou art free.' So did my God set me free, out of the hands of unreasonable men, according to his promise made to me; praises to the name of my God for ever!"

It was the common practice of the dominant party to

force the oaths of allegiance and supremacy upon the people, and thus, through the frequent changes of government, make them swear and forswear. This was a sufficient reason with Friends for refusing to take them, independent of the testimony they were called to bear against all oaths, as unlawful under the gospel dispensation. The Truth had made them free from the necessity of oaths. They were an upright people, who, for conscience-sake, submitted to every ordinance of the government when it did not interfere with religious obligations. Their simple promise was found more binding upon them, than oaths proved upon most other people. His refusing to add to his Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay, was one of the causes of William's frequent imprisonments.

In the early labours of William Dewsbury and his friends, they were not left destitute of sufficient evidence, spiritual, supernatural, and providential, that the Lord was with them in their labours. Under their ministry, unacceptable as it was to the worldly-minded, thousands were soon turned from the evil of their ways, their minds overcome, and their judgments convinced, by the power accompanying the word preached. Great was the unity of feeling among all ranks in the body, and they were often enabled to partake of each other's secret exercises and conflicts, without the intervention of words. John Roberts, a minister of the society, was in the year 1674 committed to Gloucester castle by a bench of justices (so called), among whom was John Stephens, his personal enemy. The evening after his committal, he was permitted by his uncle, who was also one of the justices, to return home. That night a concern came upon him, the consideration of which brought him into a state of great distress: this was to visit his enemy Stephens. After a severe conflict of spirit, he concluded to go, although he knew, if committed again, he could expect no further kindness from his uncle. In the morning he went, leaving his wife involved in deep affliction and agitation of spirit, although she had encouraged him to yield to the Lord's requireing. That day William Dewsbury had an appointed meeting at Sedbury, which her grief and anxiety did not prevent her

from attending. When the meeting was over, William walked backward and forward in a long passage, groaning in spirit, for some time; then came, and laying his hand on her head, although a perfect stranger to her, said, "Woman, thy sorrow is great; I sorrow with thee." Then walking to and fro as before, he came to her again and said, "Now the time is come, that those who marry must be as though they married not, and those who have husbands as though they had none; for the Lord calls for all to be offered up." As she had told no one of her husband's concern, she was convinced that the Lord had given William a sense of her troubles; and, relieved and comforted by this assurance, she went home rejoicing.

During the last imprisonment which this faithful servant of the Lord was called on to endure, his little granddaughter, Mary Samm, a child of twelve years of age, died in prison, whither she had gone to wait on him. After passing through various exercises in attaining an assurance of eternal salvation, she was enabled in a remarkable manner to give glory to the Lord, and to rejoice before Him. She said that the way was made so clear for her being brought to Warwick, and her grandfather and she had lived so comfortably together, that she was perfectly satisfied as to her coming. She said to him, "Dear grandfather, I shall die, and I cannot but praise the name of the Lord while I have a being. I do not know what to do to praise his name enough whilst I live." She died soon after, and one more of this ancient sufferer's sources of enjoyment was dried up.

He now began to feel the infirmities natural to age, aggravated by the many hardships he had endured. In 1686 we find him saying, "My dear friends, through the sharp persecutions that were passed through in the heat of the day, and many long imprisonments, being nineteen years a prisoner in this town of Warwick, and four of them being kept a close prisoner, it hath pleased God to suffer my health to be impaired, so that many times I am forced to rest two or three times in going to meeting in town, not being of ability to travel as in years past." In 1688, he came up to London with a desire to attend the

Yearly Meeting; but, after labouring in the gospel for a few weeks, he found himself taken so ill as to induce his return to his own home, which he was favoured to reach two weeks before his death.

The week before he died, he testified that he could never forget the day of the Lord's great power and blessed appearance, when he first sent him to preach the everlasting Gospel. He declared that the Lord confirmed it by signs and wonders; and, particularizing a remarkable instance which had fallen under his notice, he added—"Therefore, friends, be faithful and trust in the Lord your God; for this I can say, I never since played the coward, but joyfully entered prisons as palaces, telling mine enemies to hold me there as long as they could. And in the prison-house I sang praises to my God, and esteemed the bolts and locks put upon me as jewels; and in the name of the eternal God I always got the victory." "And this I have further to signify, that my departure draws nigh. Blessed be my God! I am prepared; I have nothing to do but die, and put off this corrupt mortal tabernacle, this flesh that hath so many infirmities. But the life that dwells in it transcends above all, out of the reach of death, hell, and the grave: and immortality and eternal life are my portion for ever and ever."

He concluded with prayers to the Lord, and with fervent breathings and supplications for all his people everywhere, and quietly yielded up his spirit to him who gave it, on the 17th day of the 4th month, 1688.

William Dewsbury received not the Gospel of man nor from man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. After he had come to a knowledge of the internal operation of the Spirit, his mind was anchored, and every event that happened to him served but to confirm him in the truth. He endured as seeing him who is invisible, unchangeable; he knew that his Redeemer lived, and he felt Him to be near that justified him. On what other principle than divine faith, can we account for his so deliberately entering upon that difficult and untrodden path, persevering through all obstacles, and, meekly and patiently enduring all contradictions whilst pursuing it, triumphing over all difficulties,

and becoming more than conqueror in the end? The afflictions and persecutions he underwent, neither shook his faith, nor wearied, nor offended him. If he suffered, he never repined; if he triumphed, it was but as a servant who rejoices in his master's service, and the tribute of thanksgiving and praise was returned to Him unto whom it was alone due. He knew and testified that a holy, blameless life and conversation becoming the professors of Truth, could never be attained "by largeness of knowledge, nor strength of comprehension, but by a real dying to their wills and affections, by virtue of the daily cross."

"Having faithfully served out his generation, and finished his sufferings, testimony, and course with joy, he hath now attained the crown immortal, and is gone into the everlasting rest, from all his labours, and his works follow him with a blessed reward in the kingdom of glory and peace."

THE END.

INSTANCES

OF

EARLY PIETY,

DESIGNED

FOR THE

INSTRUCTION OF CHILDREN.

“ Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained praise.”



PHILADELPHIA :

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No. 33.

INSTANCES OF EARLY PIETY, &c.

ELIZABETH C. SECOR, daughter of Willet and Hannah Secor, of New York, was born the 30th of 1st month, 1814. When about two years old her conduct and appearance were remarkably grave and interesting, amusing herself with her needle or books, with the use of which she was indulged.

About this time she asked her uncle to read in the bible for her, which he did:—The passage that occurred was that which speaks of Abraham offering up his son Isaac. She stopped him, and told him to read no more, for she could not help crying. She often spoke of the passage afterward, and inquired why these things were so?

Being of an inquisitive mind, as she grew older, her ideas expanded, and her remarks were generally correct. Speaking of the African race, whose miseries she feelingly commiserated, she said, “The great Almighty Being loves them, as well as he loves us.—He loves all that he has made.”

She became very conversant with the New Testament, often repeating to her mother the particulars of what she had been reading. Hearing a girl of her acquaintance tell an untruth, she told her it was very wicked, and that she should not dare to do it; “because,” says she, “the great and Almighty Being sees and knows every thing we do: he knows all our thoughts; he knows what I am now doing, and of what I am now thinking.” She then got her testament and read the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, giving an account of Ananias and Sapphira who were struck dead for telling a lie—also repeating a dialogue which she had committed to memory from one of her school books; told her the consequences of such a habit, saying again, “I should be afraid of doing so, it is so wicked.” Conversing with her mother, on the attendance of religious meetings, she said, “Mother, I try when at meetings to sit still, and think of that great Almighty Being, and to love him; I love him better than I do my parents, because he is so good as to let me have my parents. He is very kind to us. We have a great many good things. I think we are greatly blessed. I have every thing I want. I love my parents next to him, and I love every body.”

She appeared so sensible of the blessing of her parents' company, that she would often speak of it. Sitting at the table after the family had finished their meal, with some of her things around her, she said, “Mother, oh how I love that Almighty Being who is so good to me: he permits me to have so many excellent things. Mother, he has a number of names: I

have read them in my testament: He is called Lord, sometimes God, and sometimes Jesus Christ, but they all mean one."

Being told that if we did nothing to displease him, and would do his will in all things, when we left this world we should live for ever with him, and sing his praises, she quickly replied, "Do mother be good and please him, and may I be so too, that when we die, we may live together, with him. I do not wish to live longer than my mother; I wish to go with her." When speaking of any thing which she intended to do, it was her practice to make this reserve, "If I should live, and nothing prevent, I think I will do thus and so." Her mother asked her why she spoke in that way; she answered, "Why mother I do not know that I shall live until then; I do not know that I shall live until to-morrow morning. What a wonderful thing it would be to you, if I should be taken away. What a trial it would be to us to lose little Sarah Ann," meaning her sister, of whom she was remarkably fond. Speaking of a young woman of her acquaintance who had lately deceased, she said, "Mother, I want to see her, but I know I cannot, for she is now a spirit. When we die, our bodies go to the dust; it is only our spirits that can live, and if we are good, they live for ever with Him who gave them to us." A few days previous to her last illness, as she was sitting by her mother, employed in needlework, she said, "Mother, it is a wonderful thing to die, is it not?" Her mother told her it was, but if we were prepared for death, it was made easy. She replied, "But it is a pleasant thing to live with our friends." She was taken ill of a fever, the 20th of the 9th month, 1820, and bore her pains, which were severe, with great patience and cheerfulness, and evinced much tenderness for her mother and aunt, who nursed her.

During her illness, she desired the bible to be read, though she could bear but little at a time, owing to the extreme irritability of her system. On the seventh day, an inflammation of the chest occurring, little hope was entertained of her recovery. Her mother wishing her to take something, she said, "Oh mother, I cannot live, I cannot get well." Her mother replied she could not give her up, it was her wish that she should do every thing to get well. She said, "Well then, mother, I am willing to try and take every thing you wish me. I have suffered much to get well, and cannot." The morning before her decease, when it was expected she was going, she revived with much brightness, and seeing her mother grieve, said, "Don't mother, do so; why dost thou cry—wilt thou go with me?" Her mother told her she could not help mourning to see her suffer; she replied, "I do not suffer; I am better than I appear to be." Requesting some of her

lations to be sent for, which was done, she thus expressed her anxiety and fear that she should not see them; "If they do not come soon, I cannot wait." She retained her senses to the last moments, and gave her parents and friends the greatest assurance that she should enjoy a far better state of existence. Just before her close she said, "Father, call all into the room." She appeared in extreme pain for a moment—her mother asked her if she was going; she said, "Yes, the doctor cannot cure me."—Afterward, "Mother, wilt thou come,—Father, wilt thou come with mother?" and was immediately gone, departing without sigh, groan or struggle, as if she had fallen into a sweet sleep; the first of the 10th month, 1820, aged six years and eight months.

MARY POST, was the daughter of Benjamin and Elizabeth Post, of London. She was of a tender spirit, sober behaviour, and piously inclined. She loved and kept to plainness in speech and apparel, but disliked finery and pride in clothing. Her deportment was serious and grave, and when about eight years of age, being at the house of a neighbour, whose daughter, nearly fifteen years of age, was much attached to Mary, she said to her, "Anna, what signify these fine things thou hast on; they will not carry thee to heaven." To which Anna replied, "Pride is not in the things, it is in the heart." Mary answered again, "But if your minds were not proud you would not wear them." She also signified to her mother that she much wondered at the great pride she observed in some young people, saying, "I hope I shall never be like them." Her mother said, "I hope thou never wilt be like them, but be an orderly child, that thou mayest be in favour with God;" at which the child wept, and said, "If I should love these fine things, I must alter much—what signify fine things when folks come to die."

In her sickness, which was attended with violent convulsions, she often said, "Oh dear Lord, if thou see fit, give me a little ease;" and lifting up her hands again, repeated similar expressions, and added, "I had rather die than live; through mercy I am not afraid to die; I shall go to rest, where I shall feel no more pain." Her mother standing mourning by her, the child looking up at her, said, "Mother, do not cry, let us be contented: the Lord can lay me low, and he can raise me again; if I were dead he can raise me again;"—then she repeated, "O dear Lord, if thou see fit, give me a little ease." Seeming very desirous to die, her mother said to her, "My dear, why art thou so earnest to die; the Lord can ease thy pain, and give thee life." She answered, "One must once die, and if I recover I must be sick again, and I had rather die while I am young; if I should live till I am older, the devil

may tempt me to evil, and I might offend the Lord. I am not afraid to die—through mercy I shall go to my rest;—if I live I am satisfied, and if I die I am satisfied. I am willing to die—I had rather die than live.” Evincing a desire to see her brother and sister who were absent, her mother said she would send for them; but inquired of her what she wished to say to them, should they not arrive in time for her to speak to them. She replied, “If I can speak, I will bid my brother be a good boy, and fear God, that he may go to God Almighty.” A little before her death she lamented that people should indulge themselves in pleasures, and not consider the love of God. The last words she was heard to speak, were, “Dear Lord God Almighty, open the door,” and so sweetly departed this life, like an innocent lamb, aged about eight years.

SARAH CAMM was the daughter of Thomas and Anne Camm, of Camsgill in Westmoreland. When near nine years old she was visited with a serious illness, and declared that she should be taken away by death, saying, “I am neither afraid nor unwilling to die, but am freely given up thereto in the will of God.” And when she saw her relations weeping, said, “Oh do not so—do not so.” Her sickness increasing very much, she was near death, but was very patient under all. Her father asked her if she could not pray unto the Lord for help. Her answer was, she could, and did pray;—and further said, she did believe the Lord, the great God of heaven and earth, would keep her, and preserve her soul, whatever became of her body. On the fifth day of her sickness, being under more than usual concern of mind, after a little space she revived and sat up in bed, and with a cheerful countenance said as follows: “My sins are forgiven me, and I have a resting place in heaven.” Then looking at her mother she said, “Oh my mother, there is also a place prepared for thee in heaven, and thou shalt as certainly enjoy it as any here. I do not desire my mother’s death, or removal from you, yet we shall meet in heaven in God’s time.” And seeing her friends weep, said, “Oh, you should not do so; I am well, I am well.” Again—“Shall I go down to the horrible pit? nay—the Lord hath redeemed my soul.” To her sister she said, “Be content, for it *is*, and it *will be* well with me; I must go to a more fair place than ever my eyes beheld. It will be well with me, and all that fear the Lord, for we shall have everlasting joy in heaven, when the wicked shall be tormented in hell.” Seeing her sister weep, she said to her, “Do not cry, dear Mary, lest thou grieve the Lord: be subject to the Lord’s will in all things; and love and be faithful to the truth, and do not forsake thy religion, whatever thou suffer for it.” And further—“I am

satisfied with my religion, I will not forsake it, though I should be fed with the bread of adversity and the water of affliction: Oh, praises! praises to my God and my Father; and, our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," and so said to the end of the Lord's prayer, and repeated it again until she came to that part—"Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," which she spoke deliberately, and signified to those about her that they were all to mind that, "for," said she, "I am freely given up to his blessed will in all things: praises to my God—bless his name, oh my soul." At another time, being in her father's arms, she said to him, "Oh my dear father, thou art tender and careful over me, and hast taken great pains with me in my sickness, but it avails not, there is no help for me in the earth; it is the Lord that is my health and my physician, and he will give me ease and rest everlasting." Near her close, she took leave of all the family, saying with a pleasant voice, "Farewell, farewell unto you all—only farewell," and then went on praising the Lord, and continued in this sweet heavenly frame of mind until she died, aged between eight and nine years.

THOMAS HAINS, son of Thomas and Hannah Hains, of Southwark, in the county of Surry, was a dutiful child, and had a sense of the fear of God upon his heart, so that during his illness he behaved himself more like a man than a child, and was careful lest he should say any thing amiss. When he took that which refreshed him, he acknowledged it with much thankfulness; being also very sensible of the love and tender regard which his parents had toward him, he expressed it to them several times. He bore his sickness with much patience, and often expressed his willingness to die, saying, "It is better for me to die—this is a troublesome world; and we should every day and every moment think upon the Lord." A few days before his decease he uttered many expressions, in prayer and praises to the Lord, saying, "Thou art a God of love; thou art a God of mercy; thou knowest the hearts of them that love thee; thou knowest the hearts of them that seek thee; Lord remember thy people. Thou knowest the hearts of the wicked; thou knowest the hearts of the ungodly; thou hast nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against thee." He also spoke of the care we ought to take of the never-dying soul. At another time, expressing his inward satisfaction in a future state, he said, "Glory, glory; joy, joy;—come mother—come father—come all—it is a brave place, there are no tears nor sorrows." He praised God, saying, "Thou art worthy to have the honour and the glory for ever more; for to thee they do belong; thou

art God of heaven and of the whole earth;" and continued in prayer about a quarter of an hour. One evening several friends coming to see him, he desired their prayers to the Lord for him, and next day prayed himself again, saying, "Our Father who art in heaven," &c. and added, "It is a brave thing to be at peace with the Lord." His end being near, he said, "Father, let me die." Again, "Father, Father," (his father being present, asking him what he desired, he said, "I do not speak to thee, but to my heavenly Father,") "have mercy on me." He expressed how much joy he had with the Lord, and desired those about him to be still, and lay secretly praising the Lord. A few hours before he died, he said, "I come, Father, I come." Through weakness his voice was low, yet he was heard to say, "God is my Father," and so peacefully finished his life, aged nine years.

RUTH MIDDLETON, daughter of Samuel and Rebecca Middleton, was taken ill of a consumption, under which she lingered for several months; during which time she uttered many very remarkable expressions, amongst which the following were particularly noticed.

Her mother was much afflicted at the prospect of parting with her, which the child observed, and on one occasion, after lying still a considerable time, as if she was in a slumber, she opened her eyes, and said, "What is the matter, what is the matter; my dear mother, do not be troubled for me—do not sorrow for me: I shall be happy; it is the Lord's will that I am thus afflicted, and we must be contented. Thou knowest that Abraham was willing to offer up his only son Isaac; and thou dost not know if thou could freely give me up, but that the Lord would spare me a little longer to thee; but if it be his good pleasure to take me to himself, his holy name be blessed for ever." At another time, her mother asked her how she was; she replied, "But indifferent; but I am well satisfied, for it is the will of God that I am thus afflicted. Oh my dear mother, I would be glad if thou could freely give me up." On going to slumber, she prayed thus, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done in me as it is in heaven: Oh sweet Lord Jesus, feed me daily with the bread that comes down from heaven. And, Lord, if it stand with thy will, grant that I may sleep to refresh this poor, needy body; but thou, Lord, knowest what I stand in need of better than I can ask. Lord, be with me, with my father, and mother, and brother." After this she went to sleep, and on waking, said, "Oh blessed and praised be thy holy name, oh Father of life, for thou hast heard my desires, and hast answered me, for I have slept

sweetly." At another time she said, "The Lord said to his followers, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' And if I be not happy, what will become of ungodly men and women? For truly I am afraid of offending any body, for fear I should offend the Lord." A friend inquiring of her how she did, remarked that she hoped her mind was still turned to the Lord. She replied, "Although I can hardly speak, I think upon the Lord, and he knows my thoughts and answers them."

Some time after, she said, "It will not be long before I shall be at rest and peace, where there is no more pain to the body or to the mind, and where there is nothing but joy for evermore. Dear mother, be willing to part with me, for I am willing to part with you all; I am not at all concerned for myself, but for thee, my poor mother, who doth, and will make thy bed a bed of tears often for me." Hearing her mother speak doubtfully of her recovery, she said, "Oh. what the Lord pleases; for I am not afraid of death; I never wronged any body of a pin, to my knowledge. I never told a lie but once: when I should have said yes, I said no; but that has been a great trouble to me, and the Lord I hope will forgive me, for I called the maid and told her the truth."

Near her close, she desired to be removed from the country to London. "The air," says she, "does me no good; the doctor does me no good: the Lord is the same at home, as nere;" and on being removed there, said, "Now I am glad; if I die it is better to be here, and will save a great deal of trouble." On being asked if she was willing to leave her father and mother and go to the Lord, after a pause she replied, "If the Lord please, I am willing this very minute to leave all, for I shall be happy." The night before her death, a friend having prayed by her, she said, "I do understand well, and am inwardly refreshed. I am sorry I could not speak so that the friend could hear, or else I would give an account of my inward peace with the Lord." A few hours before her death she prayed, but her voice was very low, "Oh Lord, withhold not thy tender mercy from me at the hour of death. Oh Lord! let thy loving kindness continually preserve me." Afterward—"I desire to slumber; but if I die before I wake, I desire the Lord may receive my soul." She was thankful for the tender care of her mother, and with a low voice, said, "Farewell, dear mother, in the love of the Lord, farewell;" then desired to see her father and brother, and feeling for her brother's face, stroked it and said, "Farewell, be a good boy." Her father asked her how she was; she replied, "I am just spent, but I am very easy, and shall be very happy. My body is full of pain, but the angel of the Lord is with me, and his presence will for ever preserve

me." Then she kissed her relations, bade them all farewell, and quietly breathed her last; aged about eleven years and two months.

HANNAH HILL was the daughter of Richard and Hannah Hill, of the city of Philadelphia. In very early life her mind was inclined to piety; her behaviour was sober and discreet, her temper courteous and obliging. She was frequent in reading the Holy Scriptures, dutiful and obedient to her parents, and an example of simplicity and true piety. She was seized with a violent fever and dysentery, which increased so upon her, that on the third day of her illness, it was thought she would have departed, but revived a little. At this time she was under a great concern of spirit about her future state, and would often say, "Am I prepared? am I prepared? Oh that I might die the death of the righteous, and be numbered with those at the right hand! Oh, Almighty God, prepare me for thy kingdom of glory." Afterward she said to her father—"Father, I shall die, and I am now very willing." After some time—"Oh most glorious God, now give me patience, I beseech thee, with humility to bear what it shall please thee to lay upon thy poor afflicted handmaid." From this time she entirely made death her choice, and would often say, "I had rather die and go to God, than continue in this world of trouble," adding, "When will the messenger come? Oh! hasten thy messenger." Turning to her father, said, "Oh that I could launch away like a boat that sails, so would I go to my dear brother, who is gone to heaven before me."

The physician calling to see her, she requested him to sit down by her, and said to him, "All the town knows thou art a good doctor, but I knew from the beginning that I should die, and that all your endeavours would signify nothing. The Lord hath hitherto given me patience, and I still pray him for more, that I may be enabled to hold out to the end, for my extremity of body is very great." She entreated her parents freely to give her up to the will of God, saying it would be better for both; and when she thought she had prevailed with them, said, "Now I am easy in my mind." Some persons present encouraging her with hopes of recovery, she said, "Why is there so much ado about me, who am but poor dust and ashes; we are all but as clay, and must die: I am going now, another next day, and so, one after another, the whole world passes away." A person taking leave of her, said, "I intend to see you again to-morrow;" she replied, "Thou mayst see me, but I shall scarcely see thee any more, though I will not be positive—God's will be done."

To her mother she would often say, "Art thou sorry I am

going?" And to others who waited on her—"Why are you troubled, and weep, seeing I am but going to a better place? Oh that the messenger would come—that my glass were run!" At another time she said, "Oh, my dear mother, I fear the Lord is displeased with me." She was answered, "Dear child, why shouldst thou entertain such thoughts?" "Because," said she, "I am continued thus long to endure the extremity of body, which none knows but myself, nor can any think how great my pains are." Her doubts, however, were afterward removed, for she said to her father, "I think the Lord has showed me I do not bear all this for myself only; glory be to his infinite name! there is nothing can be compared to him." On the first day of the week, she asked her mother if she were going to meeting, and being answered no, that she could not leave her dear child in that condition, she said, "Let my cousins go, for it may be the Lord will be displeased if all the family stay at home." And speaking of their conduct when there, bade them, "not to look upon one another, but to wait upon God." She several times prayed to the Lord to grant her patience; and to give her living water, that it might spring up in her unto eternal life. Not long before her departure, she said, "Father, the Lord hath assured me I shall be happy." It was answered, "That is comfortable indeed." She rejoined, "Aye, this is matter of joy and rejoicing, can my soul say by living experience." Taking leave of her dear and only sister, and a cousin whom she dearly loved, she expressed herself thus: "Dear sister, my desires are, that thou mayst fear God, be dutiful to thy parents, love truth, keep to meetings, and be an example of plainness. Dear cousin, be a good boy, observe thy uncle and aunt's advice, and the Lord will bless thee." Commending her spirit to God, saying, "Glory, glory, glory," as with the sound of a hymn, this innocent child closed her eyes and expired, as if falling into a sweet sleep, without sigh or groan. She was aged eleven years and about three months.

WILLIAM FENNELL, was the son of William Fennell, of Youghall, in Ireland. About the tenth year of his age he was favoured with a visitation of Divine Love, the Lord often following him with the convictions and reproofs of his Holy Spirit, when he had been vain and foolish, and run to play among other children. When he was brought upon a sick bed, he was under great exercise of mind, and desired his mother to read to him. Desiring to have the ten commandments read, it was done, and being asked how far he had kept them, he answered, he had not, as he could remember, ever taken the Lord's name in vain, that he had loved and honour-

ed his father and mother, and had been careful not to tell lies or false stories on any one, nor had he stole any thing, except taking some plums once without asking leave, which he hoped the Lord would pass by, with what else he had done amiss. Remaining very weak, he was asked if he were willing to die. He answered, "If I thought I were fit."

The third of the first month, two friends being in town, he desired they might have a meeting in the chamber with him, and he afterwards expressed his satisfaction therein, and then broke forth in much trembling, saying, ' O Lord! forgive all my faults, and have mercy and pity on my poor soul; keep out the enemy that is ready to come in upon me, for none but thou, O Lord! art able to do it," with much more; and then called for his sisters and brother, and exhorted them to love and fear God, and pray to him to fit them to die, and to love truth, and to go to meetings, and think upon God, and the Lord would love them. And further, to do what their father and mother bid them, and be obedient to them, and look in their bibles, and they would find it was God's command to children, to obey their parents, for it is well pleasing unto the Lord.

One of his companions being by, he said to him, "Dost thou think that thou art fit to die! If thou think thou art not, then pray to the Lord, and desire him to make thee fit, and do not mind play too much;" saying he was very sorry he had minded it so long, but he hoped the Lord would forgive him. Lying still some time under a concern of mind, he was asked what his concern was; and after some pause, he answered, "I am desiring the Lord to bring me in with the rest of his lost sheep;" with more to that purpose, saying, "I have cried unto him many a night since I have been ill; for I have been a wild boy, and loved play too well, and when you have sometimes corrected me, I took it a little hard; but now I am glad you did, and I cannot express the love I now have to you, for taking that care of me; you did well; had you not done it, I might have been wilder; for," said he, "the Lord hath been following me, and striving with me, to bring me down these two years, and has let me see when I have been running to play, that if I continued running on to be wild, then weeping, wailing, and lamentation would be my portion; and sometimes I have turned back, and have gone into the garret, and wept bitterly, and have desired the Lord to help me: but afterward, when enticed by my comrades to go, I was not able to resist the temptation, which was my great trouble, and I have got into a secret place to endeavour to retire, and often have prayed to the Lord in the night-season on my knees, when others have been asleep. Oh! he doth not love laughing and joking; I never read that Christ smiled, but often prayed and

wept." Then he prayed, "O Lord! hear me, and have pity on me; for thou knowest I am very sore afflicted; Lord, help me: Oh! it is none but thou that canst do it, Lord. O Lord! be near me, and suffer not the enemy to prevail over me."

Speaking of the Lord's prayer, this child said, "I have much lamented to consider how people teach their children the Lord's prayer, without minding the depth that is in it," saying, 'Our Father which art in heaven:' but they that remain in wickedness are not his children, so cannot rightly call him Father. 'Hallowed be thy name:' but too many dishonour it by their wicked words. 'Thy kingdom come:' oh! but too few let the Lord live, and have dominion in them. 'Thy will be done in earth [that is, said he, in our earthen bodies] as it is done in heaven;' [and, we all know there is nothing but the will of God done there:] oh! but how little of the Lord's will is done here. 'Give us this day our daily bread:' Oh Lord," said he, "give me daily bread from thee. 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us:' but oh! how unwillingly do many people forgive them that trespass against them? How can such expect forgiveness of the Lord? 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;' (and then he said) oh! leave me not in temptation, but deliver me from the tempter; 'for thine is the kingdom, and all power is with thee, and glory for ever.' This prayer," said he, "people teach their children by heart, and think it is enough. I have been at play with a boy in the street, and his father hath called to him, saying, 'Have you said your prayers to-day?'—and he hath gone in from me, and stood behind the door, and hath said this prayer as fast as he could for haste to go to play again; I hearkened to him all the while." Such careless ones he lamented; and he gave good advice to many that came to him, and advised the servant maid against speaking bad words; and, though his breath grew short, he said, "I desire to please the Lord always;" and so continued in a wonderful manner. He was very resigned unto the will of the Lord, and desired his parents to give him up freely; then took his leave, in great tenderness, of his father, mother, sisters, and brother, and relations; desiring to have his love remembered to his grandmother, and some other relations and friends who were not present; and pausing, he said, "Oh! what joy I feel!" Then praising the Lord while strength remained, thus sweetly departed this life, aged twelve years and a half, and two days.



ON THE OBSERVANCE

OF

THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

[*Extracted from the writings of early Friends.*]

“WE, not seeing any ground in scripture for it, cannot be so superstitious as to believe that either the Jewish sabbath now continues, or that the first day of the week is the anti-type thereof, or the true Christian sabbath, which, with Calvin, we believe to have a more spiritual sense, and therefore we know no moral obligation, by the fourth command or elsewhere, to keep the first day of the week more than any other, or any holiness inherent in it. But first, forasmuch as it is necessary that there be some time set apart for the saints to meet together to wait upon God; and that, secondly, it is fit at some times they be freed from their other outward affairs: and, thirdly, that reason and equity do allow, that servants and beasts have some time allowed them to be eased from their continual labour; and that fourthly, it appears that the apostles and primitive Christians did use the first day of the week for these purposes, we find ourselves sufficiently moved, for these causes, to do so also, without superstitiously straining the scriptures for another reason, which, that it is not to be there found, many Protestants, yea, Calvin himself upon the fourth command, hath abundantly evinced. And though we therefore meet and also abstain from working upon this day, yet doth not that hinder us from having meetings also for worship at other times.”—*Barclay's Apology*, p. 349.

In answer to a charge exhibited against the society of Friends, William Penn says, “It is well known, in what country soever they live, they follow the practice of the apostles in assembling together on the first day of the week—they do it

constantly and reverently. To say that we many times follow our usual trades on that day, is a plain untruth; the whole world knows better, though we do not judaize; for worship was not made for time, but time for worship; nor is there any day holy of itself, though holy things may be performed upon a day."—*Penn's Works*, 2d vol. p. 479.

George Fox, in an epistle which he wrote in the year 1673 to Friends in Jamaica, says—"We hear that some professing truth amongst you, do not keep to your meetings as they ought to do, nor yet meet but few of you together on the first days. Truly, friends, this is an ill savour, and shows that you mind your own business more than the Lord's—and the things of this life more than the things that appertain to the life that is without end, which should be sought for first if you desire to be blessed and to prosper. And if you do not, you will grow loose and wither, and not have the blessing of God with you; you cannot expect it. And therefore, you who go under the name of the friends of God and of Truth, keep diligently your meetings on the first day together, that the Lord's power may stir amongst you: for if you do not keep your meetings on the first day of each week, you are worse than the world, who prefer your own business before the Lord's." He also adds, "Let there be meetings on the week days."—*See folio collection of his epistles*, p. 329.

In another epistle, written to his friends in the year 1675, he remarks—"For I would have all to know, that they who be heirs of the gospel and of Jesus Christ, are redeemed out of the vain observations of days, and out of the Jewish and apostate Christians' holy days, to God by Christ, who made all days and every thing good, and their eyes are to the supernatural day of Christ, and they are the children of this day. And that is a creeping spirit that would go to alter the usual and constant meeting days, under pretence to prevent people from the corruptions of observing a constant day, or under pretence of keeping people out of a form, and so would father their deceit upon God. For they who be in possession of the power by which all true forms and all things are upheld, (which word and power gives form and being to all things) and all them that are in it, are above all such things, and judge all such dark spirits."—*Ibid.* p. 358.

In a conference between George Whitehead and the minister of Emmeth, in Norfolk, the latter proposing the following question, "Whether there be any moral difference in days under the gospel?" George Whitehead replied, "No, not as under the law in the observation of Sabbaths, which were a shadow

and sign to Israel, and are ended in Christ in whom is the faithful soul's everlasting rest or Sabbath. Yet there is and may be a religious or occasional difference made in days under the gospel, as where a day is or may be regarded unto the Lord; especially in religious assemblies, and particularly as was and is practised on the first day of the week among Christians."—*Family Library*, vol. iii. pp. 117–118.

Henry Tuke, in his "Duties of religion and morality," says—"though no place is exclusively essential to the performance of public worship, yet some place is necessary for 'the assembling of ourselves together,' and some time must be peculiarly appropriated to this purpose. Under the Jewish law, and most probably prior to that time, the seventh day of the week was set apart for this service: but when that dispensation was abrogated, the primitive Christians thought proper to alter the time from the seventh to the first day of the week. Although the ceremonial part of the Jewish Sabbath is not obligatory upon Christians, yet several of the reasons assigned for its institution apply to us equally with them. Christians in all ages have, therefore, agreed in the appropriation of a seventh day or one day in the week, to be particularly set apart for public worship, and for other means of religious improvement, as also for a time of relaxation, and rest from bodily labour to those who are subject to it. This indulgence was extended under the law, to the animal creation as well as to those persons who were in a state of servitude and bondage: 'That thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid and the stranger may be refreshed.' The religious observance of one day in the week is of so much importance to the preservation of piety and virtue, and the neglect of it is so evidently marked with irreligion, and in general with immorality, that however necessary it is to avoid the superstitious observance of it which our Saviour had occasion to censure in the time of his personal appearance on earth, yet every reasonable consideration conspires to press the practice closely upon us, as affording an opportunity which many could not otherwise easily obtain, of acquiring religious instruction and improvement, and of publicly performing that worship which is due unto 'Him that made heaven and earth, the seas and the fountains of waters.' The pious Christian does not however confine his public devotions to one day in the week. Sensible of the obligation, and feeling the benefit, of a more frequent performance of this religious service, he embraces opportunities, when afforded to him, of attending on public worship, on some other day or days than that which is specially

set apart for this purpose : and although this may, in some instances, require him to leave his temporal concerns, and may seem to be attended with some worldly disadvantages, yet the views which he entertains of religious obligations, induce him to follow the example of the good king David, when on a certain occasion he made use of this disinterested language : ‘Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing.’”

Among the many obvious marks of declension from true virtue, especially to be lamented, is the disregard of the solemn duties for which the generality of Christians have set apart the first day of the week. Instead of employing it in assembling for the public worship of Almighty God, and in attention to the most weighty concerns of the immortal soul, how many are sorrowfully prostituting it to purposes diametrically opposed to these indispensable obligations, spending it in the pursuit of sensual indulgences and vain amusements, and thereby dishonouring the holy name which they profess ! How many are employed in a manner not consistent with the truly rational as well as holy purposes of that day, in unnecessarily visiting each other, in riding merely for recreation, business and pleasure, or in collecting and feasting together, to the great oppression of those employed in their service, and thereby depriving them of the privilege of attending their several places of worship, which is the reasonable duty of all without distinction of colour, rank, or station ! On serious reflection, we hope all will acknowledge that these things ought not to be. Works of mercy, humanity, or unavoidable necessity, such as visiting and consoling the sick and afflicted, or other occasions of Christian duty, may sometimes lawfully interfere ; but if non-attendance to public worship is indulged from lukewarmness towards God, or the want of a sense of his manifold mercies to us, and the obligations we are under to reverence and adore his goodness, such are in imminent danger of falling into unbelief, and departure from the living God.



SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF
CAPTAIN PAUL CUFFEE.

PAUL CUFFEE, the subject of this narrative, was the youngest son of John Cuffee, a poor African, whom the hand of unfeeling avarice had dragged from his home and connexions, and sold into a state of slavery; but who, by good conduct, faithfulness, and a persevering industry, in time obtained his freedom. He afterwards purchased a farm; and, having married one of the native Indians, brought up a family of ten children respectably, on one of the Elizabeth Islands, near New Bedford, Massachusetts.

In the year 1773, when Paul was about fourteen years of age, his father, dying, left a widow, with six daughters, to the care of him and his brothers. Although he had no learning, except what he received from the hand of friendship, yet by that means he advanced to a considerable degree of knowledge in arithmetic and navigation. Of the latter, he acquired enough in two weeks to enable him to command his own vessel in its voyages to many ports in the southern states, the West Indies, England, Russia, and to Africa. The beginning of his business in this line was in an open boat, but by prudence and perseverance, he was at length enabled to obtain a good-sized schooner, then a brig, and afterwards a ship. In the year 1806, he owned a ship, two brigs, and several small vessels, besides considerable property in houses and lands.

Feeling in early life a desire of benefiting his fellow-men, he made use of such opportunities as were in his power for that purpose. Hence, during the severity of winter, when he could not pursue his usual business in his little boat, he employed his time in teaching navigation to his own family and to the young men of the neighbourhood. Even on his voyages, when opportunity offered, he instructed those under his

care in that useful art. He was so conscientious, that he would not enter into any business, however profitable, that might have a tendency to injure his fellow-men ; and, seeing the dreadful effects of drunkenness, he would not deal in ardent spirits on that account. In the place where he lived there was no school ; and as he was anxious that his children should obtain an education, he built a house on his own land, at his own expense, and gave his neighbours the free use of it ; being satisfied in seeing it occupied for so useful and excellent a purpose.

In many parts of his history, we may discover that excellent trait of character which rendered him so eminently useful ; a steady perseverance in laudable undertakings. It is only by an honest, industrious use of the means in our power, that we can hope to become respectable. His mind had long been affected with the degraded and miserable condition of his African brethren, and his heart yearning towards them, his thoughts were turned to the British settlement at Sierra Leone. In 1811, finding his property sufficient to warrant the undertaking, and believing it to be his duty to use a part of what God had given him, for the benefit of his unhappy race, he embarked in his own brig, manned entirely by persons of colour, and sailed to Africa, the land of his forefathers. When he arrived at Sierra Leone, he had many conversations with the governor and principal inhabitants, and proposed to them a number of improvements. From thence, he sailed to England, where he met with great attention and respect ; and, being favoured with an opportunity of opening his views to the Board of Managers of the African Institution, they cordially united with him in all his plans. This mission to Africa was undertaken at his own expense, and with the purest motives of benevolence.

He was very desirous of soon making another voyage, but was prevented by the war which took place between England and America. In 1815, however, he made preparations, and took on board his brig thirty-eight persons of colour, and after a voyage of fifty-five days, arrived safe at his destined port. These persons were to instruct the inhabitants of Sierra Leone in farming and the mechanic arts. His stay at this time was about two months ; and when he took his leave, particularly of those whom he had brought over, it was like a father leaving his children, and with pious admonition commending them to the protection of God. He was making arrangements for a third voyage, when he was seized with the complaint which terminated his labours and his life. He was taken ill

in the winter, and died in autumn following, 1817, in the fifty-ninth year of his age. To the benefit of his African brethren he devoted a portion of his youthful acquisitions, of his later time, and even the thoughts of his dying pillow.

As a private man, he was just and upright in all his dealings. He was an affectionate husband, a kind father, a good neighbour, and a faithful friend. He was pious without ostentation, and warmly attached to the principles of the Society of Friends, of which he was a member, and sometimes expressed a few sentences in their meetings which gave general satisfaction. Regardless of the honours and pleasures of the world, he followed the example of his divine Master in going from place to place doing good, looking not for reward from man, but from his heavenly Father. Thus walking in the ways of piety and usefulness, and in the enjoyment of an approving conscience, when death appeared, it found him in peace, and ready to depart. Such a calmness and serenity overspread his soul, and showed itself in his countenance, that the heart of even the reprobate might feel the wish, "let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

A short time before he expired, feeling sensible that his end was near, he called his family together. It was an affecting and solemn scene. His wife and children, with several other relatives, being assembled around him, he reached forth his feeble hand, and after embracing them all, and giving them some pious advice, he commended them to the mercies of God, and bid them a final farewell. After this, his mind seemed almost entirely occupied with the eternal world. To one of his neighbours who came to visit him, he said, "Not many days hence, ye shall see the glory of God; I know that my works are gone to judgment before me, but it is all well, it is all well."

He lived the life, and died the death of a Christian. He is gone whence he never shall return, and where he shall no more contend with raging billows, and with howling storms. Thither could we follow him, we should learn the importance of fulfilling our duty to our Creator, to ourselves, and to our fellow-creatures. Such was his reputation for wisdom and integrity, that his neighbours consulted him in all their important concerns: and what an honour to the son of a poor African slave! The most respectable men in Great Britain and America were not ashamed to seek him for counsel and advice.

Thus we see how his persevering industry and economy, with the blessing of Providence, procured him wealth. His

wisdom, sobriety, integrity, and good conduct made him many friends. His zealous labours for the honour of his Maker, and for the benefit of his fellow-men, gave him a peaceful conscience; and an unshaken belief in the mercies and condescending love of his heavenly Father, afforded in his dying moments that calmness, serenity, and peaceful joy, which are a foretaste of immortal bliss.

The following is an extract from his address to his brethren at Sierra Leone:—"Beloved friends and fellow-countrymen, I earnestly recommend to you the propriety of assembling yourselves together to worship the Lord your God. God is a spirit, and they that worship him acceptably must worship in spirit and in truth. Come, my African brethren, let us walk in the light of the Lord; in that pure light which bringeth salvation into the world. I recommend sobriety and steadfastness, that so professors may be good examples in all things. I recommend that early care be taken to instruct the youth while their minds are tender, that so they may be preserved from the corruptions of the world, from profanity, intemperance, and bad company. May servants be encouraged to discharge their duty with faithfulness: may they be brought up to industry, and may their minds be cultivated for the reception of the good seed which is promised to all who seek it. I want that we should be faithful in all things, that so we may become a people giving satisfaction to those who have borne the burden and heat of the day in liberating us from a state of slavery. I leave you in the hands of Him who is able to preserve you through time, and crown you with that blessing which is prepared for all who are faithful to the end." This appears to be the simple expression of his feelings, and the language of his heart.

To his coloured brethren we would say, pause and reflect. Do not think because you cannot be as extensively useful as he was, that you cannot do any good. There are very few, if any people in the world, but who may be useful in some way or other. If you have health, you may by your industry, sobriety, and economy, make yourselves and your families comfortable. By your honesty and good conduct you may set them and your neighbours a good example. If you have aged parents, you may soothe and comfort their declining years. If you have children, you may instruct them in piety and virtue, and in such business as will procure them a comfortable subsistence, and prepare them for usefulness in the world.

A CONCISE
AND
FAMILIAR EXPOSITION
OF THE
LEADING PROPHECIES
REGARDING
THE MESSIAH,
INTENDED AS A
MANUAL FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

"Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?"
Matt. xi. 3.



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EXPOSITION OF PROPHECIES

REGARDING THE MESSIAH.

ONE of the most striking circumstances connected with the Christian dispensation, is the long and singular train of prophecy by which it was ushered into the world. These remarkable predictions, delivered in various ages, were committed to the custody of a chosen people, whose whole history and present condition have themselves been justly accounted miraculous. Events foretold, though in some instances of a most extraordinary nature, and, before their actual occurrence, apparently irreconcilable with each other, were brought to pass, in the person of Jesus Christ, hundreds of years after they were predicted,—at a time when, in consequence of these prophecies, there was a strong expectation of the promised Deliverer,—and by means of agents not at all interested in their completion. The predictions relate to all the important circumstances in Messiah's history,—his pre-existent state, the family of which he was to be born,—the time, place, and other circumstances of his nativity,—his external rank and condition,—his divine inspiration,—his moral character,—his offices,—his miraculous works,—his last sufferings, death, and burial, his resurrection and ascension,—and other remarkable events which were to follow his appearance.

I. With respect to Messiah's **PRE-EXISTENT STATE**, the prophets tell us in the plainest manner, that the hour of his earthly birth was not to be the commencement of his being. Thus Micah declares, that, out of the town of Bethlehem Ephratah, "shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, **FROM EVER-LASTING.**"* They speak moreover of his equality with God. Thus Zechariah, in a memorable passage, cited by our blessed Lord, on the eve of his death, as applicable to himself, breaks out in the following remarkable words: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is **MY FELLOW**, saith the Lord of Hosts."† They tell us still further that he is God himself. Thus Isaiah announces, "Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name **IM-MANUEL**,"‡ which being interpreted, as the evangelist Matthew

* Mic. v. 2.

† Zec. xiii.

‡ Is. vii. 14.

explains, is "God with us."* And again, the same prophet declares, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given;" "and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **THE MIGHTY GOD**, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."† — When Jesus of Nazareth, accordingly, appeared upon earth, he spake of his own pre-existence. He told the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am;"‡ and, in addressing his Father, he referred to "that glory, which he had with him, before the world was."§ He declared, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father;"|| and it was imputed to him by the Jews as blasphemy, that he made himself equal with God. In still more express terms, he asserted his own divinity, saying, "I and my Father are one;"¶ "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."** But it may naturally be asked, in what manner he established his claim to this high character, and by what signs he manifested his divinity. To this it is answered, that he exhibited every one evidence and seal of his divinity, which imagination can suggest, or the nature of the claim can possibly admit,—by performing supernatural works,—by penetrating the secrets of the heart,—by teaching sublimer truths and purer doctrines, than had ever fallen from the lips of uninspired man,—by being the single individual, that ever appeared in the form of man, of whom it could be said, that "he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,"††—by rising victorious from the grave,—by visibly ascending to that heaven whence he declared he came,—by the miraculous fulfilment of that promise, which he gave to his apostles, of extraordinary assistance from above, and of his other predictions, particularly those regarding the destruction of Jerusalem, the persecution of his followers, and the triumphant march of his religion. What stronger proof, upon this subject, could have been demanded from our Lord, than what all these circumstances, taken together, afford; or would the Most High have vouchsafed so strong an attestation in favour of one, who had presumptuously usurped his own honour?

II. With regard to the **FAMILY** of which Christ was to be born, it is pleasing to observe the manner in which the light of prophecy, dim and feeble at first, breaks forth more and more unto the perfect day. In the first promise which was made to the mother of mankind, she was assured only in general terms that it was "**HER SEED**, which should bruise the

* Mat. i. 23.
|| Jno. v. 23.

† Is. ix. 7.
¶ Jno. x. 30.

‡ Jno. viii. 58.
** Jno. xiv. 9.

§ Jno. xvii. 5
†† Heb. iv. 15.

serpent's head."*—When ABRAHAM, the father of the chosen people, was providentially called to leave his own country, and his kindred, for a land that God would show him, he received the express promise, that "in him," or, as was afterwards more distinctly explained to him, "in his seed, all families of the earth were to be blessed."†—This patriarch had more than one son, and, in answer to his prayer, "O that Ishmael might live before thee," as well as on other occasions, he was expressly told, that the covenant was to be made, not with Ishmael, his first begotten, but with the son of Sarah, who was not yet born. "Sarah, thy wife, shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him,"—"and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with ISAAC, which Sarah shall bear unto thee."‡—Isaac, in like manner, had two sons, Esau and Jacob; and here, again, the promise was limited to JACOB, to the exclusion of his elder brother. The Lord said unto Jacob, "I am the Lord God of Abraham, thy Father, and the God of Isaac;"—"in thee and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed."§—Jacob had twelve sons, and in the prophetic blessing, which he pronounces over them, on his death-bed, he distinctly marks out the chosen tribe. After warning Reuben, that though he "was his first born, his might, and the beginning of his strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power, yet unstable as water, he should not excel,"—and declaring of Simeon and Levi, that "he would divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel,"—he, in rapturous and glowing language, hails the future glory of the more highly-favoured JUDAH. "Judah, thou art he, whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies, thy father's children shall bow down before thee:" "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."||—It was lastly revealed, that the promised Deliverer should be of the stock of JESSE, and the house of DAVID. "There shall come forth," said Isaiah, "a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,"¶ &c. So, also, Jeremiah declares, "Behold the days come, saith the

* Gen. iii. 15.

† Gen. xii. 3. xxii. 18.

‡ Gen. xvii. 18—21.

§ Gen. xxviii. 13, 14.

|| Gen. xlix. 3—10.

¶ Is. xi. 1.

Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch,"* &c.—All this was fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, who was the seed of the woman; the seed of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; of the tribe of Judah; of the stock of Jesse; and of the house and lineage of David.

III. With regard to the **TIME** of Messiah's birth, it was announced by the patriarch Jacob, in the passage already quoted, that "the sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, **UNTIL SHILOH COME;**"† which implied, that this tribe should continue a peculiar people, possessing its own laws, until the coming of the Deliverer. Every other tribe lost this distinction, long before the appearance of Christ. The ten revolting tribes never returned from Assyria. Benjamin became an appendage of the tribe of Judah. But Judah continued a distinct people, retaining, even under a foreign master, its own peculiar laws and customs. Thus, in our Saviour's trial before Pilate, the governor bade the Jews "take him and judge him **ACCORDING TO THEIR LAW.**"‡ From the answer made to this proposal, it would appear, indeed, that their former rights, in this respect, had begun to be curtailed, and, that they had lost, in their own persons, the power of life and death; though, even in this matter, they seem to have retained the right to call upon the foreign judge to administer "their" law. "We have a law," said they, "and by our law he ought to die."§ The sceptre was then on its departure; and not long thereafter, the Jews ceased to be a nation, and were scattered abroad over the face of the earth. Had Christ's appearance accordingly taken place at a period not much later than it actually did, the prophetic declaration of the patriarch could not have been accomplished.—With regard to the time of this appearance, also, a remarkable revelation was made to Daniel. "**SEVENTY WEEKS** are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that, from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks." "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself."|| Now, it has been shown by Sir Isaac New-

* Jer. xxiii. 5.

† Gen. xlix. 10.

‡ Jno. xviii. 31.

§ Jno. xix. 7.

|| Dan. ix. 24—26.

ton, as well as many other learned men, that by computing each day for a year, the seventy weeks were precisely accomplished at the time when Christ was *cut off*. On this subject, it seems proper to remark, that the division of years, as well as of days, into weeks or portions of seven, was quite familiar to the Jews, with whom every seventh year was a sabbath for the land, as every seventh day was for the people. It is also remarkable, that this comparison of years to days seems not to have been uncommon in their prophetic language. It was thus the Lord, by Moses, foretold to the children of Israel their forty years' detention in the wilderness: "After the number of the days, in which ye searched the land, even forty days, **EACH DAY FOR A YEAR**, shall ye bear your iniquities; even forty years."* Thus also we read in the fourth chapter of Ezekiel, that the Lord enjoined this prophet to perform a certain observance for forty days, as typical of a period of forty years; saying, "I have appointed thee **EACH DAY FOR A YEAR**."†—There yet remains one striking circumstance, by which the prophets still further limited the period of Messiah's advent, namely, their declaration that it should take place during the subsistence of the second temple. "I will shake all nations," saith the Lord by Haggai, "and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill **THIS HOUSE** with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts."‡ So also Malachi announces, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly **COME TO HIS TEMPLE**, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts."§ At a time, accordingly, when men were eagerly looking out for the "desire of all nations," Christ came to that temple, of which, within a few years, not one stone was to be left upon another, and there received the welcome greetings of those "who waited for the consolation of Israel."

IV. The precise **PLACE** of the Messiah's birth is distinctly pointed out in ancient prophecy. "Thou **BETHLEHEM EPHRATAH**," saith Micah, "though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel."|| Had an uninspired penman ventured to predict, from probability alone, the birth-place of the promised king of Judah, he would hardly have fixed it at Bethlehem; which, though truly the city of David, was only the residence of his early years, under the lowly roof of his father Jesse. Such a writer would, on the contrary, have rather led his countrymen to look for this event at Sion, the royal residence. Relying, however, on the pro-

* Num. xiv. 34. † Ez. iv. 6. ‡ Hag. ii. 7. § Mal. iii. 1. || Mic. v. 2.

phesy of Micah, the Jews appear to have had an universal expectation that their king was to be born at Bethlehem. So the priests and scribes expressly told Herod, when he, with jealous fear, made inquiry upon the subject.* So also, on one occasion, some of the Jews, under the erroneous notion that Christ was a native of Nazareth, where he had been brought up, rejected him, saying, "Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"† It adds, moreover, much weight to the evidence of Scripture prophecy, that the ordinary residence of Christ's mother was at Nazareth; and that the providence of God has so ordered, for the fulfilment of the prediction, that she should, notwithstanding, be at Bethlehem at the time of her son's birth. This, too, was brought about, not by means of agents, who had in view the accomplishment of prophecy, but in obedience to the decree of a Heathen Emperor.

V. Besides the family of which Messiah was to be born, and the time and place of his birth, there were **OTHER REMARKABLE CIRCUMSTANCES** connected with his nativity, which were the subjects of prophecy. Thus Isaiah, in a passage already referred to, declares, "Behold A VIRGIN shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel;"‡ and this accordingly was fulfilled in the person of Jesus, who was born of Mary, a Virgin of Nazareth. Ancient prophecy, also, in more than one passage, and by the mouth of more than one prophet, foretold, that ere the Lord himself should come forth for the deliverance of his people, a messenger should go before him to prepare his way. Isaiah speaks of "THE VOICE of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."§ So also Malachi, the last of the Prophets, thus speaks in the name of the Lord, "Behold I will send MY MESSENGER, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple."|| Accordingly, before Jesus Christ commenced his ministry, the voice of John the Baptist was heard in the wilderness of Judea, preaching the preparatory doctrine of repentance for the remission of sins,—declaring that "there came one after him who was mightier than he, the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose:"¶ and expressly pointed out Jesus as the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the World."***

* Mat. ii. 5.

|| Mal. iii. 1.

† Jno. vii. 41, 42.

‡ Mat. i. 7.

§ Is. vii. 14.

** Jno. i. 29.

§ Is. xl. 3.

VI. The descriptions given by the prophets of Messiah's external RANK and CONDITION are very remarkable. In some of them he is described as a Prince endowed with all glory and power; in others, as placed in the lowest and most abject condition; and there are still others in which both conditions are at once ascribed to him. In the language of Jeremiah, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a KING shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."* "I saw," said Daniel, "in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."† "The government," saith Isaiah, "shall be upon his shoulder;" "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."‡ On the other hand, the same prophet declares, "He is DESPISED and REJECTED of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."§ But this description of the Messiah's humiliation, it ought to be particularly remarked, is both preceded and closed by representations of his exaltation and triumph. "Behold," saith the prophet in the preceding words, "my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; (his visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men;) so shall he sprinkle many nations, the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that, which had not been told them, shall they see; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider."|| So also in the concluding words, the prophet, in the name of the Lord, triumphantly declares, that he "will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong."¶ In the following remarkable passage, also from the same Prophet, the lowest humiliation is blended with the loftiest exaltation in the description of the future deliverer. "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to HIM WHOM MAN DESPISETH, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, PRINCES ALSO SHALL WORSHIP, because of the Lord that is faithful,

* Jer. xxiii. 5.

§ Is. liii. 3.

† Dan. vii. 13, 14.

|| Is. lii. 13—15.

‡ Is. ix. 6, 7.

¶ Is. liii. 12.

and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.”* Zechariah likewise exclaims, “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Sion, shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem: behold **THY KING** cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation, **LOWLY** and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass.”† The literal fulfilment of this prophecy on Christ’s entrance into Jerusalem is well known. The prediction itself plainly implies, that Messiah, though a king, was to have none of the pride and pomp of earthly monarchs.—All these apparently conflicting predictions have been strikingly fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, the son of Mary. Who could be more “despised and rejected of men,” than this reputed son of a carpenter of Nazareth; born in a stable, and cradled in a manger; the companion of lowly fishermen, and even the friend of publicans and sinners, the very outcasts of the people; the continual subject of scorn and false accusation; who had not where to lay his head; and who died at length the ignominious death of a malefactor on the cross? Yet this despised Nazarene have we seen “exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, receiving the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession:”‡ “him, whom man despised,” whom his own “nation abhorred,” have we ourselves seen “kings and princes arise and worship;” and to him hath been given a “name, which is above every name, at which every knee” doth already begin “to bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.”§

VII. It was foretold that Christ should be in a particular manner endowed with **THE HOLY SPIRIT**. Thus Isaiah speaking of the rod of Jesse, says, “The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord,”|| &c. Again, he saith, “Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him.”¶ And again, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings,”*** &c. It was, accordingly, the boast of the Apostles, that “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power;”†† and, in proof of this assertion, they could refer not only to the doctrines which he taught, and to the works which he wrought, but also to the visible descent of the Spirit upon him, at the time of his baptism.

* Is. xlix. 7

|| Is. xi. 2.

† Zec. ix. 9.

¶ Is. xlii. 1.

† Ps. ii. 8.

** Is. lxi. 1.

§ Phil. ii. 10, 11.

†† Ac. x. 38.

VIII. With regard to the **MORAL CHARACTER** of Messiah, he is described by the prophets, as perfectly holy, guileless, humble, patient, gentle, merciful. Isaiah, speaking in the name of the Lord, calls him "My righteous servant."* By Jeremiah, he is termed "**THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**;"† and by Daniel, "the Most Holy.‡" Isaiah says, "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth."§ Zechariah, "he is just and having salvation, lowly,"|| &c.—Speaking of his patience, Isaiah saith, "He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."¶—In reference to his gentleness, the same prophet declares, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street; A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench."** Again, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young."††—With regard to his mercy, particularly as displayed in compassion to the poor and needy, it would be endless to multiply passages. Neither is it necessary to point out to any one at all acquainted with the life of our blessed Lord, as portrayed by the evangelists, how eminently he, in all respects, sustained the character which had previously been given of him by the prophets.

IX. The prophets describe the various **OFFICES** which the Messiah was to execute, for the salvation of his people, viz. these of instruction, expiation, and government. We cannot here recite all the passages, in which the shedding abroad of **LIGHT** and **KNOWLEDGE** is ascribed to him. We shall mention only one circumstance connected with this subject, which is the peculiar boast of Christianity,—that its divine author, unlike former teachers, was to address his doctrine, not to the more highly-favoured classes only of the community, but also to the poor and the lowly. In the language of Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings **UNTO THE MEER.**"†† So, also, Jeremiah, speaking in the name of the Lord, of the new covenant which he was to make with the house of Israel and of Judah, declares, "They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me, **FROM THE LEAST OF THEM** unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."§§ These

* Is. liii. 2. † Jer. xxiii. 6. ‡ Dan. ix. 24. § Is. liii. 9. || Zec. ix. 9.
¶ Is. liii. 7. ** Is. xlii. 2, 3. †† Is. xl. 11. ‡‡ Is. lxi. 1. §§ Jer. xxxi. 34.

predictions were fully accomplished. The first of them our Saviour himself recited, in the Synagogue of the city where he was brought up, adding, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears;"* and in answer to John's message, "Art thou he that should come?" he replied, "The poor have the Gospel preached to them."†—The Redeemer's EXPIATORY OFFICE is no less clearly pointed out by the prophets.—Isaiah declares, "Thou shalt make his soul AN OFFERING FOR SIN." "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows;" "he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."‡ "He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." "He hath poured out his soul unto death,"—"and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."§ So also it was revealed to Daniel, that "Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself;" and that "he should finish the transgression, and make an end of sins,"—"and bring in everlasting righteousness."|| How all this was fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, who, in the language of his Apostles, "was made sin for us," yet "knew no sin,"¶ it is unnecessary to state.—In treating of the external condition of the Messiah, we have already had occasion to notice some of the prophecies, which relate to his KINGLY OFFICE, and the mode of their completion. Suffice it, at present, to say, that, in every one circumstance, which can be supposed to constitute a great and glorious prince, the fulfilment of prophecy is complete; by the wise and salutary laws which Christ has given to his church,—by the protection which, during so many ages, he has afforded it, against all the assaults of its enemies,—and by the triumphant manner, in which, going forth conquering and to conquer, he continues to extend his victorious sceptre over the kingdoms of the earth.

X. The prophets speak of the MIRACULOUS WORKS which Messiah was to perform. "Then," saith Isaiah, "the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."** All this, and much more, it is needless to observe, were literally fulfilled in the person of Christ, who, in testimony of his divine mission, could say, "Go and show John again those things, which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk;

* Lu. iv. 21. † Mat. xi. 4, 5. ‡ Is. liii. 10, 4—6. § Is. liii. 8, 12.
 || Dan. ix. 26. 24. ¶ 2 Cor. v. 21. ** Is. xxxv. 5, 6.

the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up!"*

XI. The prophetic accounts of the Messiah's **LAST SUFFERINGS AND DEATH**, are delivered with a minute accuracy, which, (if we were not perfectly certain that they were given long before the event,) would lead us to believe that they were historical descriptions rather than predictions. The 53d chapter of Isaiah, and the 22d Psalm are particularly striking. With regard to the book of Psalms, we may take this opportunity of observing, that, though it is not arranged in our Bibles among the prophetic scriptures, it possesses all the characteristics of this species of writing, was viewed in this light by the ancient Jews, and is accordingly referred to, very frequently, both by our Lord and his apostles, as belonging to this class. The writings of David, in particular, the progenitor and representative of Christ, while applicable to himself only in a remote and figurative sense, were, in many instances, literally fulfilled in the person of Jesus, and in his person only.—Following the order of events, we may notice, upon this branch of the subject, in the first place, the singular prophecy of Zechariah, in which he says, "They weighed, for my price, **THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER**, And the Lord said unto me, **CAST IT UNTO THE POTTER**; a goodly price that I was prized at of them: And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter, **IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.**"† Now, the evangelists tell us, that the price for which Judas covenanted to deliver up his master to the chief priests, was "thirty pieces of silver;" that the traitor, "when he saw that Jesus was condemned, repented himself, and cast down the pieces of silver in the temple; and that the chief priests "took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers in."‡—The same prophet, speaking of the man that is God's fellow, says, "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."§ The evangelists inform us, that, on the night on which Jesus was betrayed, he, referring expressly to this very passage, told his Apostles, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night."|| The predictions, both of Zechariah and of Jesus, were that night fulfilled. "They all forsook him and fled;"|| and one of the most valiant actually thrice denied him.—"He was taken," says Isaiah, "from prison and from judgment."¶ The evangelists tell us, that Christ was arrested by order of the chief priests, who kept him a prisoner all night, and delivered him over, next morn-

* Mat. xi. 4—5. † Zec. xi. 12, 13. ‡ Mat. xxvi. 15; xxvii. 3—7.
§ Zec. xiii. 7. || Mar. xiv. 27, 50. ¶ Is. liii. 8.

ing, to Pilate, the Roman governor, who sent him to Herod, and at length upon his return, pronounced judgment against him.—“I gave my back,” says Isaiah, “to the smiters.”* And again, “He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities;” “and with his stripes we are healed.”† The evangelists tell us, “Pilate took Jesus and scourged him.”‡ — Isaiah says, “He is despised and rejected of men,” and again, more particularly, “He hid not his face from shame and spitting.”§ So also the Psalmist complains, “I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people; all they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.”|| Compare this with the accounts given by the evangelists of the insults offered to our Lord. While he stood before the high priest, they did spit upon him, and buffet him, and smote him with the palms of their hands.”¶ “Herod,” also, “with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe.”** In leading him away from Pilate’s judgment-seat, “the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns” and “put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand;” “and they spit upon him, and took the reed and smote him on the head” and “mocked him.”†† On the cross, too, “they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying,” “If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the Chief Priests, mocking him, with the Scribes and Elders, said, “He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he will have him.”‡‡ One of the thieves also, “cast the same in his teeth.”§§—The Psalmist says, “They pierced my hands and my feet;”¶¶ and Zechariah, “They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son,”§§ &c. The evangelists tell us of Jesus that “they crucified him,” and that “one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side.”|||—Isaiah says, “He was numbered with the transgressors.”¶¶ The evangelists tell us that he died the death of a malefactor, and that they crucified two thieves with him.***—The cry of agony, which Jesus uttered upon the cross, was that of the prophetic Psalmist, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”—“They part, saith

* Is. l. 6. † Is. liii. 5. ‡ Jno. xix. 1. § Is. liii. 3. l. 6. || Ps. xxii. 6—8.
¶ Mar. xiv. 65. ** Lu. xxiii. 11. †† Mat. xxvii. 29—31. 39—44.
‡‡ Ps. xxii. 16. §§ Zec. xii. 10. ||| Jno. xx. 34. ¶¶ Is. liii. 12.
*** Mar. xv. 27.

David, "my garments among them, and **CAST LOTS** upon my vesture."* The evangelists tell us, that "the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat; now the coat was without seam woven from the top throughout: they said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be."†—"They gave me also," saith the Psalmist again, "**GALL** for my meat, and, in my thirst, they gave me **VINEGAR** to drink."‡ Now the evangelists inform us, that, when our Redeemer was about to be nailed to the cross, "they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall, and, when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink;" and that, in the very close of this awful tragedy, "Jesus"—"saith, I thirst;"—"and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth: When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, **IT IS FINISHED**: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."§

XII. The very **BURIAL** of Jesus is the subject of accomplished prophecy. "He made his grave," saith Isaiah, "with the wicked, and **WITH THE RICH** in his death."|| After the sad picture which the prophet had drawn, in the immediately preceding words, of Messiah's low condition, in point of external circumstances and worldly reputation, surely nothing could be more unlikely, than that he should receive a burial with the rich. Yet, however obscure and despised had been his life, and apparently ignominious his death, all the evangelists concur in expressly testifying, that "there came a **RICH MAN** of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus,"—"and, when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb."¶

XIII. The **RESURRECTION** of the "Holy One" from the grave, ere his body should see corruption, and his subsequent **ASCENSION** to the right hand of the Father, are thus spoken of by David in the sixteenth Psalm: "My flesh also shall rest in hope; for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to **SEE CORRUPTION**; thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy; **AT THY RIGHT HAND** there are pleasures for evermore."*** All this, as every Christian, on sure evidence, believes, was literally and fully accomplished in the person of the Holy Jesus; and that it was thus fully accomplished in his person only,

* Ps. xxii. 1, 18.

† Jno. xx. 23, 24.

‡ Ps. lxxix. 21.

§ Mat. xxvii. 34. Jno. xix. 28—30.

|| Is. liii. 9.

¶ Mat. xxvii. 57—60.

*** Ps. xvi. 9—11

has been conclusively argued by two of his Apostles, Peter and Paul, in their discourses on different occasions. So also the whole of the 110th Psalm, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand," &c. refers to Messiah's exaltation, as our blessed Lord himself and his Apostles have clearly shown; and received its accomplishment on the ascension of Christ.

XIV. The prophets foretold several remarkable events, which were to follow the Messiah's appearance, such as, an extraordinary and general effusion of the Holy Spirit, the bringing in of the Gentiles, and the destruction of Jerusalem with its temple. With regard to the effusion of the HOLY SPIRIT, Isaiah led his countrymen to look forward to a remarkable era, when "the Spirit should be poured upon them from on high."* And Joel told them, in the name of the Lord, in language which must to them have been far more startling, "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon ALL FLESH,"† &c. This promise, which our Lord, in his last words to his Apostles, assured them was immediately to be accomplished, began to be confirmed on the memorable day of Pentecost, by the visible and glorious descent of that Spirit, who afterwards so signally displayed his Almighty power by the wonderful gifts which he bestowed on the Apostles,—and his impartial goodness, by its being shed abroad, not upon the Jews alone, but upon Cornelius also, and other Gentile converts.—On the subject of the bringing in of the GENTILES, it would be endless to recount all that has been written by the prophets. Suffice it, therefore, to refer to that early declaration of Jacob, that "unto Shiloh shall the gathering of the nations be;"‡ and to the no less distinct assurance of Malachi, the last of the prophets, "From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts."§ Of the manner in which these predictions have been fulfilled, and are still daily fulfilling, the people of this remote land are at once witnesses and living examples.—The last circumstance which we have mentioned, is the predicted DOWNFALL OF JERUSALEM AND ITS TEMPLE. This event, the last which the mind of a Jew would be inclined either to imagine or receive, is alluded to in many passages of the Jewish Scripture. But of these the most remarkable is the revelation made to Daniel, in which it is expressly dis-

* Is. xxxii. 15.

† Joel ii. 28.

‡ Gen. xlix. 10.

§ Mal. i. 11

closed, that "the people of the prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary," &c. This prophecy was afterwards, on different occasions, more fully repeated and explained by our blessed Lord himself, who, on beholding the city, "wept over it," saying, "The days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another."[†] The total destruction of the city and temple by the Romans, under all the circumstances foretold in Scripture, is the subject no longer of prophecy, but of undoubted history.

In reviewing the whole of this subject, the Christian may triumphantly ask, whether any one of the vast multitude of circumstances above enumerated, "which God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, that have been since the world began," has failed to be fully accomplished in the person of Jesus Christ,—whether they have ever been accomplished in the person of any other individual who has yet appeared, or can be so fully accomplished in the person of any who may yet appear? Even if it should be imagined, that the application of some of the above prophecies to Messiah is at all doubtful, far more than enough will remain of undoubted predictions, universally applied by the ancient Jews to their great promised Deliverer, and all accomplished in the person of Jesus Christ. Nor is it any good objection, that the prophecies, though undoubtedly fulfilled, have, in some respects, received their accomplishment in a manner different from that which the Jews previously expected. This, in truth, adds strong additional weight to the prophetic evidence, as utterly exclusive of the notion, that the fulfilment had been designedly brought to pass by the agents of Christianity. The most satisfactory, doubtless, of all prophecy, is that which is fulfilled by the agency, either of men who had no belief in the prophecy, or of those who neither looked for nor desired its accomplishment, in the manner which they themselves have been instrumental in bringing to pass. The application of this principle to the religion of Christ is sufficiently obvious.—In conclusion, we shall only further observe, that of the strong argument arising from prophecy, the above is necessarily no more than a faint and imperfect outline; and that the more the subject is considered, the more shall we be led to exclaim with the eye-witnesses of our Saviour's miracles, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

* Dan. ix. 26.

† Luke xix. 41—44.

A

MEMOIR

OF

SIR MATTHEW HALE.



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No. 37.

A MEMOIR
OF
SIR MATTHEW HALE.

SIR MATTHEW HALE, lord chief justice of England, was born in Gloucestershire, in the year 1609. Before he was six years old, he lost both his parents; but by the care of a judicious guardian, great attention was paid to his education. When he had completed his studies at Oxford, he quitted the university, with an intention of going into the army; but on the persuasion of Sergeant Glanville he entered at Lincoln's Inn; and with great vigour, and almost unexampled application, bent his mind to the studies of his profession.

In early life he was fond of company, and fell into many levities and extravagancies. But this propensity and conduct were corrected by a circumstance, that made a considerable impression on his mind during the rest of his life. Being one day in company with other young men, one of the party, through excess of wine, fell down, apparently dead, at their feet. Young Hale was so affected on this occasion, that he immediately retired to another room; and shutting the door, fell on his knees, and prayed earnestly to God, that his friend might be restored to life, and that he himself might be pardoned for having given countenance to so much excess. At the same time he made a solemn vow, that he would never again keep company in that manner, nor "drink a health" while he lived. His friend recovered, and Hale religiously observed his vow. After this event, there was an entire change in his disposition; he forsook all dissipated company, and was careful to divide his time between the duties of religion, and the studies of his profession. He became remarkable for a grave and exemplary deportment, great moderation of temper, and a religious tenderness of spirit; and these virtues appear to have accompanied him through the whole of his life.

The following extract from a diary which he regularly kept, shows the piety of his mind, and how solicitous he was to make the best use of his time.

Morning

"1. To lift up the heart to God in thankfulness for renewing my life.

"2. To renew my covenant with God in Christ. First, by renewed acts of faith receiving Christ, and rejoicing in the height of that relation; secondly, by resolving to be one of his people, and doing him allegiance.

"3. Adoration and prayer.

Day Employment.

"There must be an employment of two kinds.

"1. Our ordinary calling, to serve God in it. It is a service to Christ, though ever so mean. Here observe faithfulness, diligence cheerfulness. Not to overcharge myself with more business than I can bear.

"2. Our spiritual employments. Mingle somewhat of God's immediate service in the day.

If alone.

"1. Beware of wandering, vain, sensual thoughts; fly from thyself rather than entertain these.

"2. Let thy solitary thoughts be profitable. View the evidences of thy salvation, the state of thy soul, the coming of Christ, and thy own mortality; this will make thee humble and watchful.

Company.

"Do good to them. Use God's name reverently. Beware of leaving an ill impression, or ill example. Receive good from them, if they are more knowing.

Evening.

"Cast up the accounts of the day. If there was aught amiss, beg pardon; resolve to be more vigilant. If thou hast done well, bless the mercy and grace of God, which have supported thee."

Thus did this excellent man occupy himself in the service of God, at the same time that he was making great progress in the study of the sciences, and particularly that of the law, in which he became a greater proficient than any of his contemporaries.

In the duties of his office as a judge, he conducted himself with the greatest integrity. The motives which influenced him to the faithful discharge of these duties, were founded on

the only firm basis—that of religion. This will appear by an extract from one of his papers, entitled, “ Things to be had in continual remembrance.” Among a numerous list of these are the following. “ That, in the administration of justice, I am intrusted for God, the king, and the country : and, therefore, that it be done uprightly, deliberately, resolutely.—That I rest not upon my own direction and strength ; but implore and rest upon the direction and strength of God. —That, in the execution of justice I carefully lay aside my own passions, and give not way to them, however provoked. —That I be not biassed with compassion to the poor, or favour to the rich, in point of justice.—That popular or court applause or dislike, have no influence in any thing I do in the distribution of Justice. That I be not solicitous about what men think or say, so long as I keep myself exactly according to the rules of justice.”

The writings of Sir Matthew Hale, on religious subjects, particularly his “ Contemplations Moral and Divine,” manifest a truly humble frame of mind ; and contain a seriousness and fervency, well adapted to excite kindred emotions in the breast of the reader. We shall select a few of these, as testimonies which this great and good man bore to the power and efficacy of religion, as the guide, support, and comfort of our lives.

“ True religion,” says he, “ teaches the soul a high veneration for Almighty God ; a sincere and upright walking, as in the presence of the invisible, all-seeing God. It makes a man truly love, honour, and obey him, and therefore careful to know what his will is. It renders the heart highly thankful to him, as his Creator, Redeemer, and Benefactor. It makes a man entirely depend on him, seek him for guidance, direction, and protection, and submit to his will with patience and resignation of soul. It gives the law, not only to his words and actions, but to his very thoughts and purposes ; so that he dares not entertain any which are unbecoming the presence of that God, by whom all our thoughts are legible. It crushes all pride and haughtiness, both in a man’s heart and carriage, and gives him a humble state of mind before God and men. It regulates the passions, and brings them into due moderation. It gives a man a right estimate of this present world, and sets his heart and hopes above it ; so that he never loves it more than it deserves. It makes the wealth and the glory of this world, high places, and great preferments, but of little consequence to him ; so that he is neither

covetous, nor ambitious, nor over-solicitous, concerning the advantages of them. It makes him value the love of God and the peace of his own conscience, above all the wealth and honour in the world, and to be very diligent in preserving them. He performs all his duties to God with sincerity and humility; and, whilst he lives on earth, his conversation, his hope, his treasures, are in heaven; and he endeavours to walk suitably to such a hope."

Of the inward direction and assistance of the Spirit of God to the soul, he writes as follows:

"They who truly fear God, have a secret guidance from a higher wisdom than what is barely human, namely, the Spirit of truth and goodness; which does really, though secretly, prevent and direct them. Any man that sincerely and truly fears Almighty God, and calls and relies upon him for his direction, has it as really as a son has the counsel and direction of his father; and though the voice be not audible, nor discernible by sense, yet it is equally as real as if a man heard a voice, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.'"

"Though this secret direction of Almighty God is principally seen, in matters relating to the good of the soul; yet even in the concerns of this life, a good man fearing God, and begging his direction, will very often, if not at all times, find it. I can call my own experience to witness, that even in the temporal affairs of my whole life, I have never been disappointed of the best direction, when I have, in humility and sincerity, implored it."

"The observance of the secret admonition of this Spirit of God in the heart, is an effectual means to cleanse and sanctify us; and the more it is attended to, the more it will be conversant with our souls, for our instruction. In the midst of difficulties, it will be our counsellor; in the midst of temptations, it will be our strength, and grace sufficient for us; in the midst of troubles, it will be our light and our comforter."

"It is impossible for us to enjoy the influence of this good Spirit, till we are deeply sensible of our own emptiness and nothingness, and our minds are thereby brought down and laid in the dust. The spirit of Christ is indeed a humbling spirit; the more we have of it, the more we shall be humbled; and it is a sign that either we have it not, or that it is yet overpowered by our corruptions, if our heart be still haughty."

"Attend, therefore, to the secret persuasions, and dissua

sions of the spirit of God, and beware of quenching or grieving it. This wind that blows where it lists, if shut out or resisted, may never breathe upon us again, but leave us to be hardened in our sins. If observed and obeyed, it will, on all occasions, be our monitor and director. When we go out, it will lead us; when we sleep, it will keep us; and when we awake, it will talk with us."

The following reflections on the vicissitudes of human affairs, and on the benefits to be derived from duly considering them, are highly interesting and instructive.

"In the course of my life, I have been in as many stations and places as most men. I have experienced almost continual motion; and although, of all earthly things, I have most desired rest, and a fixed private station, yet the various changes that I have seen and found, the public employments that without my seeking, and against my inclination, have been put upon me, and many other interventions, as well private as public, have made it literally my experience, that I have here no continuing city. When I had designed for myself a settled mansion in one place, and had fitted it to my convenience and repose, I have been presently constrained, by my necessary employments, to leave it, and repair to another; and when again I thought to find repose there, and had suited it to my convenience, some other necessary occurrences have diverted me from it. And thus, my dwellings have been like so many inns to a traveller, of longer continuance, indeed, but of almost equal instability."

"This unsettledness of station, though troublesome, has given me a good and practical moral; namely, that I must not expect my rest in this lower world; but must consider it as the place of my journey and pilgrimage, and look further for complete happiness. And truly, when I reflect, that it has been the wisdom of Almighty God, to exercise, with this kind of discipline, those worthies whom he has exhibited as patterns to the rest of mankind, I have no reason to complain of it as a difficulty or an inconvenience; but to be thankful to him for it, as an instruction and document, to put me in remembrance of a better home, and to incite me to make a due provision for it; even that everlasting rest which he has provided for them that love him; it is his gracious design, by pouring me thus from vessel to vessel, to keep me from fixing myself too much upon this world below."

"But the truth is, did we consider this life as becomes us even as wise men, we might easily find, without the help of

such discipline, that the world below neither was intended for, nor indeed can be, a place of rest; but that it is only a laboratory to fit and prepare the souls of the children of men for a better and more abiding state; a school to exercise and train us up in habits of patience and obedience, till we are fitted for another station; a little narrow nursery wherein we may be dressed and pruned, till we are fit to be transplanted into paradise."

"The shortness of our lives, and the continual troubles, sicknesses, and calamities, that attend them; and the instances of mortality of all ages, sexes, and conditions of mankind, are sufficient to convince reasonable men, who have the seriousness and patience to consider and observe, that we have no abiding city here. And on the other side, if we will but give ourselves leisure to consider the great wisdom of Almighty God who adapts everything in the world to suitable ends; the excellence of the soul and mind of man; the great advances and improvements his nature is capable of; the admirable means which the merciful and wise God has afforded mankind, by his works of nature and providence, by his word and instruments, to qualify them for a nobler life than this world can yield; we shall readily confess, that there is another state, another city to come, which it becomes every good, and wise and considerate man, to look after and fit himself for. And yet, if we regard the generality of mankind with due consideration, they will appear to be a company of distempered people. The greater part of them make it their whole business to provide for rest and happiness in this world; they make the acquisition of wealth and honour, and the preferments and pleasures of life, their great, if not their only business and happiness; and, which is yet a higher degree of frenzy, they esteem this the only wisdom; and think that the careful provision for eternity, is the folly of a few weak, melancholy, fanciful men; whereas it is a truth, and in due time it will evidently appear, that those men only, who are solicitous for the attaining of their everlasting rest, are the truly wise men; and shall be acknowledged to be so, by those who now despise them.—'We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour: how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!'"

This eminent and virtuous man possessed uninterrupted health, till near the sixty-sixth year of his age. At this period he was affected with an indisposition which, in a short time, greatly impaired his strength; and he found himself so

went to discharge the duty of Justice of the King's Bench that he was obliged to resign the office.—“He continued, however, (says Bishop Burnet,) to retire frequently for his devotions and studies. As long as he could go himself, he went regularly to his retirement; and when his infirmities increased so that he was not able to walk to the place, he made his servants carry him thither in a chair. At last, as the winter came on, he saw with great joy his deliverance approaching; for besides his being weary of the world, and his longings for the blessedness of another state, his pains increased so much, that no patience inferior to his, could have borne them without great uneasiness of mind.—Yet he expressed to the last, such submission to the will of God, and so equal a temper, that the powerful effects of Christianity were evident in the support which he derived from it under so heavy a load.”

“He continued to enjoy the free use of his reason and senses to the latest moment of life.”

“This he had often and earnestly prayed for, during his last sickness. When his voice was so sunk that he could not be heard, his friends perceived, by the almost constant lifting up of his eyes and hands, that he was still aspiring towards that blessed state, of which he was now to be speedily possessed. He had no struggles, nor seemed to be in any pangs in his last moments. He breathed out his soul in peace.”

THE END.

A SKETCH
OF THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF
DR. JOHN D. GODMAN.



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OF

DR. JOHN D. GODMAN.

DR. JOHN D. GODMAN was born near the close of the year 1794, at Annapolis, in the State of Maryland. He was early deprived of the fostering care which flows from parental solicitude and affection; his mother died before he was two years old, and his father did not long survive her. On the death of his mother he was placed under the care of an aunt; a person who, from the superiority of her intellect and education, as well as the sweetness of her disposition, and her elevated piety, was eminently qualified to unfold, impress, and direct the youthful mind. Under such culture, he received the first rudiments of his education and his earliest moral impressions. His alphabet was taught him upon the knee of his grandmother, and when two years old, he was able to read in the Psalms. When only four years of age, he manifested such a precocity of intellect, such a fondness for books, and aptitude to learn, and withal evinced so much sensibility, frankness, and sweetness of disposition, that he gained the affection and excited the admiration of all. His reverence of truth was such, even from his infancy, that he was never known to equivocate. At the age of six, his excellent aunt died, and he was left without any suitable protector or guide, exposed to the adversities of fortune, and the snares of an unfriendly world. It appears, however, that the moral and religious impressions which had already been made upon his mind, though obscured for a time, were never wholly obliterated. During his last illness, he often spoke of his aunt with warm feelings of gratitude and affection. "If," said he, "I have ever been led to do any good, it has been through the influence of her example, instruction, and prayers." His father had lost the greater part of his estate before his death, and that which remained never came into the hands of his children. Young Godman, therefore, was early taught to

rely on his own talents and industry. Thus circumstanced, he was indented an apprentice to a printer in Baltimore; but the occupation was not congenial to his taste, and after a few years, he left the business in disgust, and entered as a sailor on board the flotilla which was then stationed in Chesapeake bay. While in this situation, an incident occurred which made a strong impression upon his mind, and to which he himself attributed much of the buoyancy and energy of his character. A raw sailor, who had been sent aloft by the captain, and was busy in performing some duty which required him to stoop, was observed to falter and grow dizzy.—‘*Look aloft,*’ cried the captain, and the fainting landsman, as he instinctively obeyed the order, recovered his strength and steadiness. The young philosopher read a moral in this trifling incident, which he never forgot, and which frequently animated and aroused him in the most adverse circumstances. It is not treating the subject with undue levity to add, that in the last and closing scene of his life, when the earth was receding from his view, and his failing strength admonished him of his peril, the watchword was still ringing in his ear. At that awful period he “looked aloft” to “worlds beyond the skies,” and therein derived strength and hope, which supported him in his passage through the narrow valley.

At the close of the war, he was permitted to follow the strong bent of his mind, and immediately commenced the study of medicine with a physician in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. He soon removed to Baltimore, where he entered the office of a highly respectable physician, and pursued his studies with such eagerness and success, and gave such promise of future eminence, that some time before he graduated, he was selected to supply, for a few weeks, the place of his preceptor, who occupied the chair of anatomy in the University of Maryland, and was disabled by the fracture of a limb from completing his winter’s course. The youthful deputy lectured with such enthusiasm and eloquence, and was so clear and happy in his illustrations, as to gain universal applause; and at the time he was examined for his degree, the superiority of his mind, as well as the extent and accuracy of his knowledge, were so apparent, that he was marked by the professors of the university, as one destined at some future period to confer high honour upon the profession.

Soon after receiving his diploma, Dr. Godman settled as a practitioner of medicine on the Eastern shore of Maryland, at the spot described with so much truth and beauty in his *Ramblings of a Naturalist*. He there became engaged in labo-

rious practice, and devoted all his intervals of leisure to the acquirement of general and professional knowledge. It was at this time that he commenced the study of Natural History, a science in which he became so distinguished an adept, and for which he ever after evinced so strong a passion.

But the place was too limited for the exercise of his powers; and not finding those advantages which he wished for the cultivation of his favourite pursuits, he removed to Baltimore, where he formed a happy matrimonial connexion. Soon after his marriage, he removed to Philadelphia, but had scarcely settled here, when he received a pressing invitation to accept the professorship of anatomy in the Medical College of Ohio; an institution then recently established. The school not succeeding, he remained in Ohio but one year, and returned to Philadelphia, which he made his residence for the succeeding four or five years. It was during this period that he published his popular and celebrated work, the *Natural History of American Quadrupeds*. The fame of Dr. Godman as a teacher of anatomy was now widely spread, and he was solicited to accept the professorship of that branch of medicine, in the Rutgers Medical College at New-York.

This situation, as well as every other in which he had been placed, he sustained with great popularity.

His practice soon became extensive, and the affairs of the college prosperous, when, in the midst of his second course of lectures, a severe cold settled on his lungs, accompanied by a copious hemorrhage, and compelled him to abandon his pursuits, and to flee for his life to a milder region. He repaired with his family to one of the West India islands, where he passed the remainder of the winter and the spring, and returned home, cheered but not cured, by the influence of that balmy climate. After his return, he settled in Germantown, and in this place and in Philadelphia he spent the residue of his life. From the time Dr. Godman left New-York, his disease advanced with so steady a pace, as to leave but little hope, either to himself or his friends, of his final recovery. He continued, however, almost to the last week of his life, to toil in his literary and scientific employments; and this too with all that ardour and enthusiasm which distinguished the more youthful part of his career. The productions of his pen are too numerous to be specified; most of them have been received with high approbation, and several republished in foreign countries.

Dr. Godman's intellectual character was very extraordinary. He possessed, naturally, all the characteristic features

of a mind of the highest order. His perception was quick and accurate; his memory exceedingly retentive, and he possessed an uncommon facility of abstracting his attention from surrounding objects, and of concentrating all his powers upon the subject of his pursuit. It was doubtless this latter trait of mind which gave such effect to all his efforts; while he was indebted to the power of his memory for the remarkable facility he possessed of acquiring languages: for although his early education had been very limited, he had acquired such a knowledge of the Latin, Greek, French, German, Danish, Spanish and Italian languages, as to read and translate them with fluency, and to write several of them with elegance. His character and acquirements are justly portrayed by a distinguished journalist, in the extracts which follow. "The tributes," said he, "which have been paid in the newspapers to the late Dr. Godman, were especially due to the memory of a man so variously gifted by nature, and so nobly distinguished by industry and zeal in the acquisition and advancement of science. He did not enjoy early opportunities of self-improvement, but he cultivated his talents, as he approached manhood, with a degree of ardour and success which supplied all deficiencies; and he finally became one of the most accomplished general scholars and linguists, acute and erudite naturalists, ready, pleasing, and instructive lecturers and writers, of his country and era. The principal subject of his study was anatomy in its main branches, in which he excelled in every respect. His attention was much directed also to physiology, pathology, and natural history, with an aptitude and efficiency, abundantly proved by the merits of his published works, which we need not enumerate.

"We do not now recollect to have known any individual, who inspired us with more respect for his intellect and heart, than Dr. Godman; to whom knowledge and discovery appeared more abstractly precious; whose eye shed more of the lustre of generous and enlightened enthusiasm; whose heart remained more vivid and sympathetic, amidst professional labour and responsibility, always extremely severe and urgent. Considering the decline of his health, for a long period, and the pressure of adverse circumstances, which he too frequently experienced, he performed prodigies as a student, an author and a teacher;—he prosecuted extensive and diversified researches; composed superior disquisitions and reviews, and large and valuable volumes; and in the great number of topics which he handled simultaneously, or in immediate succession, he touched none without doing himself credit, and

producing some new developement of light, or happy forms of expression. He lingered for years under consumption of the lungs; understood fully the incurableness of his melancholy state; spoke and acted with an unfeigned and beautiful resignation; toiled at his desk to the last day of his thirty-two years, still glowing with the love of science and the domestic affections."

Such was the amiable and interesting individual whose history has been briefly sketched. We have, however, yet to view him in another, and a far more important relation; that which man, as an immortal being, bears to his Almighty Creator.

Dr. Godman's generous and enthusiastic devotion to science and learning commands our admiration; and perhaps no more ennobling pursuits can occupy the mind of him who looks not beyond the present state of existence; but when these are brought into contrast with the solemn and momentous concerns of eternity, they sink into utter insignificance. How then was the subject of this memoir influenced by *religious* considerations?

Unhappily, the philosophical and religious opinions of Dr. Godman, were formed originally in the school of the French naturalists of the last century. Many of the most distinguished of these men were avowed atheists, and a still greater number rejected absolutely the Christian revelation. Such is fallen human nature! Surrounded by the most magnificent displays of Almighty wisdom, placed on a scene where all things speak of God, and invite us to worship and obey Him—a purblind philosophy may devote herself to the study of his works, yet pass by the testimony they furnish of his existence and attributes, and see nothing in all this wonderful creation, more noble than the mere relations of colour and form. It was so with Dr. Godman; for while assisted by such lights as these, and guided alone in his investigations by perverted reason, he became, as he tells us, *an established infidel*, rejecting revelation, and casting all the evidences of an existing Deity beneath his feet. In the merciful providence of a long-suffering God, the light of truth at length beamed upon his darkened understanding. In the winter of 1827, while engaged in his course of lectures in New-York, an incident occurred, which led him to a candid perusal of the New Testament. It was a visit to the death-bed of a Christian; the death-bed of a student of medicine. There he saw, what reason could not explain, nor philosophy fathom. He opened his Bible, and the secret was

unfolded. He was in all things a seeker of the truth, and could not satisfy himself with any superficial examination.

He applied himself assiduously to the study of the New Testament; and that this sincere and thorough examination of the inspired volume, was made the means of his full conversion, will best appear from his own eloquent pen.—The following is an extract of a letter he addressed to a medical friend, Dr. Judson, a surgeon in the navy of the United States, who was at that time in the last stage of consumption :

Germantown, December 25th, 1828.

“In relation to dying, my dear friend, you talk like a sick man, and just as I used to do, when very despondent. Death is a debt we all owe to nature, and must eventually ensue from a mere wearing out of the machine, if not from disease. Nature certainly has a strong abhorrence to this cessation of corporeal action, and all animals have a dread of death, who are conscious of its approach. A part of our dread of death is purely physical, and is avoidable only by a philosophical conviction of its necessity; but the greater part of our dread, and the terrors with which the avenues to the grave are surrounded, are from another, and a more potent source. ‘ ’Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all,’ and forces us by our terrors to confess, that we dread something beyond physical dissolution, and that we are terrified, not at merely ceasing to breathe, but that we have not lived as we ought to have done, have not effected the good that was within the compass of our abilities, and neglected to exercise the talents we possessed to the greatest advantage. The only remedy for this fear of death, is to be sought by approaching the Author of all things in the way prescribed by himself, and not according to our own foolish imaginations. Humiliation of pride, denial of self, subjection of evil tempers and dispositions, and an entire submission to his will for support and direction, are the best preparatives for such an approach. A perusal of the Gospels, in a spirit of real inquiry after a direction how to act, will certainly teach the way. In these Gospels the Saviour himself has preached his own doctrines, and he who runs may read. He has prescribed the course; he shows how the approval and mercy of God may be won; he shows how awfully corrupt is man’s nature, and how deadly his pride and stubbornness of heart, which cause him to try every subterfuge to avoid the humiliating confession of his own weakness, ignorance, and folly. But the same blessed hand has stripped death of all the terrors which brooded around the grave, and

converted the gloomy receptacle of our mortal remains into the portal of life and light. O! let me die the death of the righteous, let my last end and future state be like his.

“This is all I know on the subject. I am no theologian, and have as great an aversion to priestcraft as one can entertain. I was once an infidel, as I told you in the West Indies. I became a Christian from conviction produced by the candid inquiry recommended to you. I know of no other way in which death can be stripped of its terrors; certainly none better can be wished. Philosophy is a fool, and pride a madman. Many persons die with what is called *manly firmness*; that is, having acted a part all their lives, according to their prideful creed, they must die *game*. They put on as smooth a face as they can, to impose on the spectators, and die *firmly*. But this is all deception; the true state of their minds at the very time, nine times out of ten, is worse than the most horrible imaginings even of hell itself. Some who have led lives adapted to sear their conscience, and petrify all the moral sensibilities, die with a kind of indifference similar to that with which a hardened convict submits to a new infliction of disgraceful punishment. But the man who dies as a man ought to die, is the humble-minded, believing Christian; one who has tasted and enjoyed all the blessings of creation, who has had an enlightened view of the wisdom and glory of his Creator; who has felt the vanity of merely worldly pursuits and motives, and been permitted to know the mercies of a blessed Redeemer, as he approaches the narrow house appointed for all the living. Physical death may cause his senses to shrink and fail at the trial; but his mind, sustained by the Rock of Ages, is serene and unwavering. He relies not on his own righteousness, for that would be vain; but the arms of mercy are beneath him, the ministering spirits of the Omnipotent are around him. He does not die manfully, but he rests in Jesus; he blesses his friends, he casts his hope on One all-powerful to sustain and mighty to save, then sleeps in peace. He is dead—but liveth; for He who is the resurrection and the life has declared, ‘Whoso believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.’ ‘And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.’” * * *

This letter, which so truly contrasts the death-bed scene of the infidel with that of the Christian, so beautifully portrays the history of the change which had been effected in Dr. Godman’s own sentiments and affections, and so clearly points

the benighted wanderer to the true source of life and light, was not lost upon his friend to whom it was addressed. It described his condition, and it reached his heart.

Dr. Judson, though religiously instructed when young, having a pious clergyman for his father, and another for his elder brother, had nevertheless long since freed himself from what he called the prejudices of education, the shackles of priestcraft, and was ranging the fields of infidelity. He had acquired wealth and reputation, and was an estimable man in all the domestic relations of life; but the self-denying doctrines of the Saviour were too humbling to his proud spirit, and he could not submit to their influence. At the time he received Dr. Godman's letter, however, he was gloomy and despondent: looking forward with fearful forebodings to the period of his dissolution, which seemed not far distant. He had no confidence but that of the sceptic—no hope but that of ceasing to be. Aware of the fatal nature of the disease under which he had lingered for years, he had long been arming himself to meet the king of terrors with composure, that he might die like a philosopher—“*with manly firmness:*” but as he drew nearer to the grave, the clouds and darkness thickened around him, and he began to fear that there might be something beyond this narrow prison. His infidelity now began to give way, and he inquired with solicitude, “Is there such a thing as the new birth, and if so, in what does it consist?” He at length consented to make the investigation recommended by Dr. Godman. He took up the New Testament, and read it in the spirit of candid inquiry. A conviction of the truth of its doctrines fastened upon him. The clouds which had so long enveloped him were dissipated, light broke in upon his mind, and he was enabled to lay hold of the promises. The remaining days of his life were devoted to fervent prayer, and the constant study of the Scriptures. Through the holy influences of Divine grace, he was enabled to rely with undoubting confidence on the infinite merits of his Redeemer, his soul was filled with heavenly composure, and the last words he uttered were, “Peace peace.” If he did not die with “*manly firmness,*” he “*rested in Jesus.*”

The progress of Dr. Godman's disease was very gradual, and allowed him many intervals of comparative ease. Perfectly aware of the fatal character of his disorder, he watched its progress, step by step, with the coolness of an anatomist, while he submitted to it with the resignation of a Christian

His intellect was strong and undimmed to the last, and almost the only change that could be observed in his mind was that which belongs to a being on the verge of eternity, in whose estimate the concerns of this life are sinking in comparison with the greater interests of that to which he is approaching. His principal delight was in the promises and consolations of the Bible, which was his constant companion. On one occasion, a few days before his death, while reading aloud from the New Testament to his family, his voice faltered, and he was desired to read no longer, as it appeared to oppress him. "It is not that," replied he, "but I feel so in the immediate presence of my Maker, that I cannot control my emotion!" In a manuscript volume which he sent to a friend, and which he intended to fill with original pieces of his own composition, he wrote as follows: "Did I not in all things feel most thoroughly convinced that the over-ruling of our plans by an all-wise Providence, is always for good, I might regret that a part of my plan cannot be executed. This was to relate a few curious incidents from among the events of my most singularly guided life, which, in addition to mere novelty or peculiarity of character, could not have failed practically to illustrate the importance of inculcating correct religious and moral principles, and imbuing the mind therewith from the very earliest dawn of intellect, from the very moment that the utter imbecility of infancy begins to disappear. May his holy will be done, who can raise up abler advocates to support the truth!" "This is my first attempt to write in my Token—why may it not be the last? Oh! should it be, believe me, that the will of God will be most acceptable. Notwithstanding the life of neglect, sinfulness, and perversion of heart, which I so long led, before it pleased him to dash all my idols in the dust, I feel a humble hope in the boundless mercy of our blessed Lord and Saviour, who alone can save the soul from merited condemnation. May it be in the power of those who chance to read these lines, to say, Into thy hands I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, oh Lord! thou God of Truth!"

A reliance on the mercies of God through Jesus Christ became indeed the habitual frame of his mind; and imparted to the closing scenes of his life a solemnity and a calmness, a sweet serenity and a holy resignation, which robbed death of its sting, and the grave of its victory. The following extracts from some of his letters afford additional evidence of the great and glorious change which he had been permitted to experience.

Philadelphia, Feb 17th, 1829.

"My dear Friend,—Since my last to you my health has suffered various and most afflicting changes."—"But thanks to the mercies of Him who is alone able to save, the valley and shadow of death were stripped of their terrors, and the descent to the grave was smoothed before me. Relying on the mercies and infinite merits of the Saviour, had it pleased God to call me then, I believe I should have died in a peaceful, humble confidence. But I have been restored to a state of comparative health, perhaps nearly to the condition in which I was when I wrote to Dr. Judson; and I am again allowed to think of the education of my children, and the support of my family."

In reply to a letter from Professor Sewall, giving an account of the last moments of his friend Dr. Judson, he responds in the following feeling manner:—

Germantown, May 21st, 1829.

"My dear Friend,—I feel very grateful for your attention in sending me an account of our dear Judson's last moments. After all his doubts, difficulties, and mental conflicts, to know that the Father of mercies was pleased to open his eyes to the truth, and shed abroad in his heart the love and salvation offered through the Redeemer, is to me a source of the purest gratification, and a cause of the most sincere rejoicing. The bare possibility of my having been even slightly instrumental in effecting the blessed change of mind he experienced, excites in me emotions of gratitude to the source of all good which words cannot express."—"My health has been in a very poor condition since my last to you. The warm weather now appears to have set in, and possibly I may improve a little, otherwise it will not be long before I follow our lately departed friend. Let me participate in the prayers you offer for the sick and afflicted, and may God grant me strength to die to his honour and glory, in the hopes and constancy derived from the merits and atonement of the blessed Saviour."

Philadelphia, Oct. 6th, 1829.

"My dear Friend,—My health is, as for a considerable time past, in a very tolerable condition; that is, I can sit up a great part of the day writing or reading, without much injury. My emaciation is great, and, though not very rapid, is steady, so that the change in my strength takes place almost imperceptibly. On the whole, though I suffer greatly,

compared with persons in health, yet so gently have the chastenings of the Lord fallen upon me, that I am hourly called upon for thankfulness and gratitude for his unfailing mercies. Equal cause have I had for rejoicing, that I have learned to put my whole trust in Him; as he has raised me up help and friends in circumstances which seemed to render even hope impossible, and has blessed me and mine with peace and content in the midst of all afflictions, trials, and adversity."

In his last letter to Dr. Best of Cincinnati, with whom he had long maintained an affectionate correspondence, he writes :—

"It gives me great happiness to learn, that you have been taught as well as myself, to fly to the Rock of Ages for shelter against the afflictions of this life, and for hopes of eternal salvation. But for the hopes afforded me, by an humble reliance on the all-sufficient atonement of our blessed Redeemer, I should have been the most wretched of men. But I trust, that the afflictions I have endured, have been sanctified to my awakening, and to the regeneration of my heart and life. May we, my dear friend, persist to cling to the only sure support against all that is evil in life, and all that is fearful in death."

Dr. Best's circumstances were in several respects similar to those of his friend Godman; like him he had been a disbeliever in the Christian religion, and like him had been brought by a careful examination of its evidences to a perception and an acknowledgment of the truth. He too was at this time languishing in consumption—which brought him to the grave a few months after Dr. Godman,—and like him he was supported and animated by the precious faith of the Gospel, and yielded up his spirit in hope and peace.

Professor Sewall,* from whose account much of this memoir has been derived, remarks, "In the last letter which I ever received from him, he observes: 'I have just concluded the publication of the translation of Levasseur's account of Lafayette's progress through the United States, which will appear next week. My health has for the last week or two been very good, for me, since, notwithstanding my rather excessive application during this time, I continue to do well. My cough and expectoration are sufficiently troublesome; but

* "An Introductory Lecture delivered November 1st, 1830, by Thomas Sewall, M. D., Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the Columbian College, District of Columbia."

by light diet, and avoiding all irritation, I have but very little trouble from night sweats, and generally sleep tolerably well. To-morrow I must resume my pen to complete some articles of zoology for the *Encyclopedia Americana*, now preparing in Boston. It shall be my constant endeavour to husband my strength to the last; and by doing as much as is consistent with safety, for the good of my fellow creatures, endeavour to discharge a mite of the immense debt I owe for the never-failing bounties of Providence.”

He did husband his strength, and he toiled with his pen almost to the last hours of his life; and by thus doing has furnished us with a singular evidence of the possibility of uniting the highest attainments in science, and the most ardent devotion to letters, with the firmest belief, and the purest practice of the Christian. But the period of his dissolution was not distant: the summons arrived; and conscious that the messenger who had been long in waiting, could not be bribed to tarry, he commended his little family in a fervent prayer to Him who has promised to be the ‘Father of the fatherless, and the widow’s God,’ and then with uplifted eyes and hands, and a face beaming with joy and confidence, resigned his spirit into the arms of his Redeemer, on the morning of the 17th of Fourth month, 1830.

“The dying couch on which genius, and virtue, and learning thus lay prostrated, beamed with more hallowed lustre, and taught a more salutary lesson than could have been imparted by the proudest triumphs of intellect. The memory of Dr. Godman, his blighted promise, and his unfinished labours, will long continue to call forth the vain regrets of men of science and learning. There are those who treasure up in their hearts as a more precious recollection, his humble faith and his triumphant death, and who can meet with an eye of pity, the scornful glance of the scoffer, and the infidel, at being told that if Dr. Godman was a philosopher, he was also a Christian.”

A friend who was his constant companion during his sickness, and witnessed his last moments, writes thus:—

‘You ask me to give you an account of his last moments; they were such as have robbed me of all terror of death; and will afford me lasting comfort through life. The same self-composure and entire resignation which were so remarkable through his whole sickness, supported him to the end. O it was not death—it was a release from mortal misery to

everlasting happiness. Such calmness when he prayed for us all, such a heavenly composure, even till the breath left him, you would have thought he was going only a short journey. During the day, his sufferings had been almost beyond enduring. Frequently did he pray that the Lord would give him patience to endure all till the end, knowing that it could not be many hours; and truly his prayers were heard. '*Lord Jesus, receive my soul,*' were the last words he uttered, and his countenance appeared as if he had a foretaste of heaven even before his spirit left this world.' "

Dr. Godman's views of the authenticity and practical tendency of the Gospel, are expressed with singular force and beauty in the following extract from an essay written not long before his death

"Is proof wanting that these Gospels are true? It is only necessary for an honest mind to read them candidly to be convinced. Every occurrence is stated clearly, simply, and unostentatiously. The narrations are not supported by asseverations of their truth, nor by parade of witnesses; the circumstances described took place in presence of vast multitudes, and are told in that downright, unpretending manner, which would have called forth innumerable positive contradictions, had they been untrue. Mysteries are stated without attempt at explanation, because *explanation* is not necessary to establish the *existence* of facts, however mysterious. Miracles, also, attested by the presence of vast numbers, are stated in the plainest language of narration, in which the slightest working of imagination cannot be traced. This very simplicity, this unaffected sincerity, and quiet affirmation, have more force than a thousand witnesses—more efficacy than volumes of ambitious effort to support truth by dint of argumentation.

"What motive could the evangelists have to falsify? The Christian kingdom is not *of this world*, nor *in it*. Christianity teaches disregard of its vanities; depreciates its honours and enjoyments, and sternly declares that none can be Christians but those who escape from its vices and allurements. There is no call directed to ambition—no gratification proposed to vanity: the sacrifice of self—the denial of all the

propensities which relate to the gratification of passion or pride, with the most humble dependence upon God, are invariably taught, and most solemnly enjoined, under penalty of the most awful consequences! Is it then wonderful that such a system should find revilers? Is it surprising that sceptics should abound, when the slightest allowance of belief would force them to condemn all their actions? Or is it to be wondered at that a purity of life and conversation, so repugnant to human passions, and a humility so offensive to human pride, should be opposed, rejected, and contemned? Such is the true secret of the opposition to *religion*—such the cause inducing men who lead unchristian lives, to array the frailties, errors, weaknesses, and vices of individuals or sects, against *Christianity*, hoping to weaken or destroy the system by rendering ridiculous or contemptible those who *profess* to be governed by its influence, though their conduct shows them to be acting under an opposite spirit.

“What is the mode in which this most extraordinary doctrine of Christianity is to be diffused? By force—temporal power—temporal rewards—earthly triumphs? None of these. By earnest persuasion, gentle entreaty, brotherly monition, paternal remonstrance. The dread resort of threatened punishment comes last—exhibited in sorrow, not in anger; told as a fearful truth, not denounced with vindictive exultation; while, to the last moment, the beamy shield of mercy is ready to be interposed for the saving of the endangered.

“Human doctrines are wavering and mutable: the doctrines of the blessed and adorable Jesus, our Saviour, are fixed and immutable. The traditions of men are dissimilar and inconsistent; the declarations of the Gospel are harmonious, not only with each other, but with the acknowledged attributes of the Deity, and the well-known condition of human nature.

“What do sceptics propose to give us in exchange for this system of Christianity, with its ‘hidden mysteries,’ ‘miracles,’ ‘signs and wonders?’ Doubt, confusion, obscurity, annihilation! Life, without higher motive than selfishness; death—without hope! Is it for this that their zeal is so warmly displayed in proselyting? Is such the gain to accrue for the relinquishment of our souls? In very deed, this is the utmost they have to propose, and we can only account for their rancorous efforts to render others like themselves, by reflecting that misery loves company.”

LINES

WRITTEN BY DR. GODMAN,

Under a feeling of the immediate approach of death.

The damps of death are on my brow, the chill is in my heart,
 My blood has almost ceased to flow, my hopes of life depart ;
 The valley and the shadow before me open wide,
 But thou, Oh Lord ! even there wilt be my guardian and my
 guide.

For what is pain, if thou art nigh its bitterness to quell ?
 And where death's boasted victory, his last triumphant spell ?
 Oh ! Saviour, in that hour when mortal strength is nought,
 When nature's agony comes on, and every anguish'd thought
 Springs in the breaking heart a source of darkest woe,
 Be nigh unto my soul, nor permit the floods o'erflow.
 To thee ! to thee alone ! dare I raise my dying eyes ;
 Thou didst for all atone, by thy wondrous sacrifice ;
 Oh ! in thy mercy's richness extend thy smiles on me,
 And let my soul outpeak thy praise throughout eternity !

“ Beneath the above stanzas is the following note : ‘ Rather more than a year has elapsed since the above was first written. Death is now certainly near at hand ; but my sentiments remain unchanged, except that my reliance on the Saviour is stronger.’ ”

THE END.



MEMOIR

OF

WILLIAM CHURCHMAN,

A POOR CRIPPLE.

EXTRACTED FROM A NARRATIVE,

BY THOMAS BINGHAM, OF WHITCHURCH, ENGLAND.



PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY THE TRACT ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS,
AND TO BE HAD AT THEIR DEPOSITORY,
No. 84, MULBERRY STREET.

WILLIAM CHURCHMAN.

I TAKE the liberty to assure the public, that the following little narrative is not a work of imagination, nor is it merely *founded* on fact in its principal circumstances; but is literally a true and unadorned relation of events, the bare recollection of which warms my heart, after the lapse of several years, and will, I am certain, while it continues to beat; nor can I separate the idea of renewed converse with the once poor and deformed cripple, from my hopes of enjoying the communion of saints in that pure and blissful region the Bible has taught me to look for; and into which, from my advanced age, I humbly trust I shall, ere long, enter, by the same way he entered, even Jesus Christ.

Some years ago, soon after I had commenced preaching an occasional lecture in the village of Overton, I was casually informed, in conversation with a person who himself made no great pretensions to a religious character, that he had accidentally conversed with a poor deformed cripple, living in a wretched cot in the neighbourhood of that place, whose name was William Churchman; who had much surprised him by his fluency in talking on religious subjects; and the more so, because the man did not appear to have read any book but the Bible, nor to have attended any public worship, nor conversed with religious people of any denomination, so that he could not possibly conceive how he could have acquired the knowledge he appeared to possess.

My curiosity was much excited by this account, and I formed an instant determination to gratify it by visiting the subject of it on the evening of the following Sabbath, when I was engaged to preach at Overton, which I could conveniently accomplish, as his residence was near the road, by which I sometimes returned home.

As I approached the cottage, its exterior gave me at once an idea of the wretched poverty of the inhabitants; the thatch of the decayed roof was pervious in many places to the rain of heaven,

"And all the pelting of the pitiless storm."

The windows, of which there were two, one in each story, retained scarcely any unbroken panes of glass, and their numerous apertures were imperfectly stopped with straw, hay, and many-coloured rags.

The shattered door stood open; on entering, I beheld seated on a little stool, which, with a broken chair, and an old oaken table, composed the whole furniture of the miserable hovel, an object, whose external appearance was expressive of greater wretchedness than even that of the habitation itself; and in spite of the favour-

able idea I had conceived of him before, excited in my frame a shuddering of mingled pity and horror.

His countenance appeared to be that of a man about thirty years old, pale and squalid; his head, of an immoderate size, formed a shocking contrast to his withered limbs, which were not larger than those of a child of ten years old, distorted and deformed by several curvatures both in the legs and spine; sad consequence of neglect suffered in his infancy, from the carelessness and brutality of an ignorant and drunken mother.

He was reading when I came in. Pursuant to a design I had formed of knowing his sentiments and character from himself, without discovering my own, I accosted him with a very careless and indifferent air, "William, how do you do? what book is that you are reading?" He raised his head, and replied with a look and tone of seriousness and affection, which instantly removed all those unpleasant sensations his appearance had excited in my mind; "The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"Ha!" said I, "I have heard your religious people say, that a great deal of good may be got from that book, perhaps you can tell me if it be so, for I am sure I am bad enough, and if it will make me better, I'll read it too." He replied very gravely, "If the same Spirit who moved holy men of old to write it, open your heart to understand it, then it will do you good; but not else,—for the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

"But," rejoined I, still affecting ignorance of his meaning, "how then came you to understand them? surely *you* cannot be a learned man?"

Eyeing me with a solemn and piercing attention, he returned: "Sir, I don't know you, nor do I know why you came in here; but this I know, that I am commanded by this book to be ready to give to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in me, and I pray God that I may be enabled of him to do it with meekness and fear; you see, Sir, what a *cripple* I am, but you do not know what a *sinner* I am."

"You a sinner!" exclaimed I, "how can that be? you are not able to get about to drink, game, dance, and carouse as the rest of us can, how then is it possible that you should be a sinner?"

"True," said he, "I could not; but yet I am one of the very vilest of sinners, for I believe no son of Adam ever sinned in the way I have done; for I thought because God Almighty had made me such a poor lame cripple, and punished me so much I supposed for nothing, that therefore I might take the liberty to sin without fear, for I thought that he would never be so hard as to punish me here and hereafter too; so because *that* was the sin I could most

easily indulge, I delighted to curse and swear, and I am sure I made such new oaths and curses that even if you have been used to swear yourself, they were so very dreadful that they would make you tremble to hear them.

"However, blessed be God, about three years ago, as I was walking on my crutches in a fine sun-shiny day near the door, I was seized all at once with a violent pain in my stomach, I cried out and fell down, and I really thought I was going to die presently ;

at first I did not seem to have any fear of death, for the reason I told you before, but as I continued in violent pain, a thought came across my mind, what good work have I done in my life ? Alas ! none ! Then I shall not go to heaven now ; and if not, why I must go to hell at last. Now I was miserable indeed, for I did not know any other way to heaven than by my own works."

"Dear me," interrupted I "what other way can there be, than doing all the good we can, in order to gain the favour of God Almighty ?"

He answered me, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified, for by the law is the knowledge of sin : not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

"But," continued he, "in this distress I tried to pray, but of all the prayers you ever read in your life, if ever you read any, or all that you ever heard, if you ever heard any body pray, I believe you never heard any thing like it ; I don't think it was the prayer of faith, and yet I believe that God heard and answered it. I do not know why, but it was as it pleased him, this was it as near as I can remember.

" ' Lord, I am a poor sinner that never did any good in my life, and now I am afraid I must die and go to hell ; but O Lord, if thou canst save me, pray do ; though I don't know how it can be. O try me once more, and I will be better than David ; for he prayed seven times a day, but I will pray eight times, and read twelve chapters.' But by praying, I only meant reading eight collects out of my mother's Prayer Book."

"Well," interrupted I again, "what can be better praying than reading those excellent collects ?"

"Ah, Sir !" said he, very earnestly, "you might read all the prayers over that ever were made by man, you might make very good prayers for yourself, or if you were a bishop or some such great man, you might make prayers for other people, which they might pray in reading, and God might hear them, and yet never pray yourself in your life."

"Well," said I, "this is very strange, what is praying then ?"

He replied, "praying is telling the great God what we *feel* that we want of him."

Returning to his narrative he proceeded thus:—"It pleased God that I soon got somewhat better, and I set about my task as I had promised; but alas! in a little time, I found that I *did* not pray; that I could not believe; that I could not love God; that I could not repent of sin; and at last I left off reading my prayers, because I was afraid of mocking God any longer; but, blessed be his name, he did not suffer me to leave off reading the Testament, though the more I read, the worse I was; for I read it all through, and all seemed to condemn me; now I can see it in exceeding great and precious promises, but I could not see any of them then, I could only attend to such awful words as these: 'Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?'

"Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'

"The smoke of their torment ascendeth up, for ever and ever.

"Thou after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.'

"The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.'

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel.'

"Yet I began to read it over again, and when I came the second time to the blessed first chapter of the first epistle of John, and read these precious words:—'the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,' I felt that precious blood relieve my wounded conscience, and I seemed to myself as if I was in a new world. I could *now* repent, I could believe, I could love God, and if I had a thousand lives, I could have laid them all down for Christ."

"These are very wonderful things," said I, "that you tell me, but what was the reason why God showed them to you? was it because you were so zealous and so earnest in reading the Testament?"

He returned with inexpressible energy, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose, and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

"What," exclaimed I, "can you possibly make me believe, that the great God ever thought any thing about such a poor insignificant crippled man as you are, before he made the world?"

"Yes," said he, "else why is it said,—'chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love?'"

"Surely," said I, "you have never sinned since that time."

He replied, "In many things we offend all. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

"But," said I, "if you should sin so much as to go to hell after all this, you had better have remained as ignorant as I am."

"Being confident," he replied, "that he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand."

"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

"Who himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

"Do I understand you rightly?" asked I, "that it does not signify what sins you commit, or how you live, now he is become your Saviour?"

He replied, with a look and accent of animated and holy indignation, "God forbid! how shall we who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? for the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live, should not any longer live unto themselves, but to him that died for them and rose again."

Glancing his eye on my face, while he was thus speaking, he discerned a rising tear which I could no longer suppress, and instantly cried out, "I am sure, Sir, you are not what you seem; I adjure you, tell me what you are, and why you came to see me?"

"My dear Christian brother," said I, "it is true as you say, I am not what I seem; I am a poor sinner, who, like you, have been led by the Holy Spirit to trust in that Jesus, who died for the ungodly."

After a short pause, in which he seemed revolving somewhat in his mind, he said, "I have heard one of the neighbours say, that there is a strange kind of man, who comes sometimes to preach at David Truman's house; are not you the man?"

"Yes, my dear friend," said I, "I am the man. I have just been telling your poor neighbours, that 'the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'"

Never shall I forget his look or his action; rising hastily from his seat, and grasping one of my hands in both of his, he instantly dropped on his knees, and lifting up his eyes, beaming with extacy, he cried aloud:—

"O my God, I thank thee, thou hast not only answered, but exceeded my request; I prayed that I might see and converse with one of thy people before I died, and lo, thou hast sent me one of the ministers of Jesus."

"And now, my dear Sir, (to me) you must tell me what you said to the people upon that sweet verse, for I never heard a gospel sermon in my life."

I complied ; and when I had closed, " You know not," said he, ' how you came to be inclined to preach at Overton, but I can tell you ; ever since I have been new-born, I have daily prayed to my heavenly Father, that if there was any minister of Christ in England, which I thought there must be somewhere, because the BIBLE was here ; he would send one to teach my poor blind neighbours, and he has sent you ; and therefore, viewing you as sent in answer to prayer, I doubt not but God will make you useful to them."

After some further conversation, I commended him to God in prayer, and we parted.

The communication which I made of these very interesting particulars, to my friends on my return, induced several Christians of different denominations repeatedly to visit him with me, whose surprise and pleasure were equal to my own.

A plan was laid by a few benevolent friends, to render his outward circumstances more comfortable, though I must do him the justice to say, he was very averse to it. " I can live," said he, " on the parish allowance, (which was only two shillings per week!) and perhaps some of God's children who have families, are in much greater want than I."

One evening, soon after, he was sitting with his mother, and reading the Bible to her, apparently in as good health as ever he had enjoyed, when he on a sudden cried out, " Mother, I am taken very ill, help me up the ladder (the only stair-case they had) to bed, and then I shall have but one more step to ascend, and I shall be in my Father's house."

She assisted him to bed, and went to the next house to procure some gin, her only supposed remedy for every disease, and to call her neighbour to her assistance, but when she returned he was speechless ; and in a few minutes, without a struggle, or a sigh, entered into the joy of his Lord.

I give no comments, I make no remarks, I leave this narrative to the blessing of God, and the reflection of the reader's conscience.

I was desirous of knowing, whether he had, from searching the scriptures, obtained any distinct views of the nature of Christ's kingdom on earth ; and whether, as he conceived himself at a remote distance from any of Christ's disciples, he had turned his attention to the order and government of the church ; and therefore I made some inquiries on the subject, and received from him, with surprise, the answers which follow :

I asked him, " How many churches he apprehended God might have in our world?"

" One only," was his reply.

" What church is that?"

"The general assembly and church of the first-born, which is written in heaven."

'What then was the church of the Jews?'

"The shadow of good things to come, but the body is of Christ."

'But how are those visible to the world?'

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

'Yes; as individuals, but how shall they be visible as a church?'

"Where but two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

'That may be in many places at once, but are they not called churches? why is this?'

"Because each is like the whole church, as Paul says, In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

'How do any unite with such a church?'

"They first gave themselves to the Lord, and to us according to the will of God."

'What officers are there in the church of Christ?'

"Bishops and deacons."

'What is the office of a bishop?'

"To feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made him overseer."

'What is the deacon's office?'

"To serve tables."

'Were those offices appointed for enriching, or advancing the persons holding them?'

"Ourselves, your servants for Jesus' sake, not for filthy lucre's sake, not as lords over God's heritage, but as helpers of your joy."

'Who are to act in choosing those officers?'

"Wherefore look ye out from among yourselves, seven men of good report, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, whom we may appoint over this business."

'But if wicked men creep into the church, how are they to be dealt with when they are discovered?'

"Put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

'But if they repent afterwards?'

"What shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead."

'Does the power of kings and rulers relate to our bodies, or our consciences?'

"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; but unto God the things that are God's."

I was surprised at his ideas of this subject, and could ask him no more questions.

A BRIEF
MEMOIR

OF

RACHEL BETTS,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

HER LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH.



PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY THE TRACT ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS,
AND TO BE HAD AT THEIR DEPOSITORY,
NO. 50 NORTH FOURTH STREET.

.....

BRIEF MEMOIR, &c.

RACHEL BETTS, who died on the 13th of the first month, 1831, was the daughter of Benjamin and Sarah Betts, of London. When only five years of age, she lost her father, but she was favoured with the watchful care of a pious and affectionate mother, who endeavoured to bring her up in the love and fear of her Creator. She relates herself, that on one occasion, when about eight years old, being in the country and walking out alone, an indescribable feeling of happiness overspread her mind, produced, as she was persuaded, by the secret influences of the Holy Spirit. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth." The impression thus made on her tender heart, led her frequently to seek after the same precious feeling, but she found that such favours were not at her command, nor was a similar visitation soon again vouchsafed.

It was however evident, that her mind was at times seriously impressed. She was frequently observed to shed tears in religious meetings, even when they were held in silence, and for a considerable period previous to her last illness, her general character evinced, that the Holy Spirit was gradually preparing her for further and deeper experience in the Christian warfare.

During much of this time she had been in the practice of rising as early as about five o'clock in the morning, even in the winter season, for the express purpose of private retirement, which she spent in reading, meditation, and prayer. In the summer of 1827, she went to Hastings; which visit she frequently mentioned afforded her both pleasure and satisfaction. Her sympathetic feelings and pious concern were there called into exercise, on behalf of the poor and others; she also took much interest in visiting the poor house, and in distributing tracts.

About this time, as well as for a considerable period previously, she was anxiously concerned on account of her spiritual interests, and often engaged in fervent supplication for grace to overcome every sinful inclination, and that all within her might be brought into obedience to the cross of Christ.

The exercise of her mind is shown by the extracts from her diary, which follow.—1827; 8th mo.—"O Lord! send down thy light and thy truth, and break the galling yoke of Satan, the old adversary of our happiness, that thy kingdom may come and thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven. Thou

Almighty God, shalt have the praise, who with thy well-beloved Son, art worthy of all adoration, now and forever. Lord Almighty and eternal Saviour being at this time greatly dismayed, I make application to Thee as Thou hast said, 'Whatsoever ye ask in my name, ye shall receive.' I am bowed down on account of snares, doubts and temptations. I pour out my soul to thee the friend of sinners. O if so unworthy a creature may apply to Thee, give me of thy wisdom to discern between that which serveth thee, and that which serveth thee not; I have none in heaven but thee, nor in the earth that I desire in comparison of thee. O send down thy light and thy truth let them lead me, let them guide me to thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacle forever."

22d. "So numerous are my iniquities or weaknesses, that if in future I am favoured with preservation, surely praises, high praises will arise. I feel as on a sea of danger, but if I perish I trust it will be at the footstool of Him who died for the vilest of sinners. O for a glimpse of his glorious countenance, whom my soul esteems indeed, the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely."

Her health, which had previously been impaired, was improved by her residence at Hastings, but the ensuing spring she was seized with fever, and on recovery, a slight projection of the spine was discernible.

In the course of some months the disease had made so much progress, that a recumbent posture was considered necessary, yet at first, she ventured down stairs during the day, until the fatigue of returning exhausted her too much and she was then placed on the couch, which she scarcely left during the remainder of her life, a period of nearly a year and three quarters. She observed, that on first taking to her couch, resignation seemed given her, but that afterwards, she often found it necessary to pray fervently for divine support. In this trying situation she was generally cheerful, and when well enough, enjoyed the company of her friends. She often amused herself with knitting, reading or writing, though, finding the latter fatigue her, she made comparatively little use of the pencil. The state of her mind about this time, may be gathered from a few of her own memorandums which follow:

Sixth month 4th, 1829.—"I have now been ill nearly three months, most of which time I have spent in a recumbent position. I think I never before suffered so much; but He, who in infinite wisdom appointed the stroke, has been pleased to grant resignation, when I have been ready to conclude that the furnace was heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated, and I felt the application of these words: 'The cup

which my heavenly Father has prepared, shall I not drink it?" since which, resignation, hath, from season to season, been renewed, that my soul can speak well of his name."

Sixth month 5th.—"Should this be the last memorandum I ever write, I would celebrate the goodness of my Redeemer, and pray that in his unutterable mercy, He may, in his own time, take me into one of his many mansions. I desire to be very thankful for an interval of ease afforded by an all-merciful Redeemer, at whose feet I cast myself, and beg for patience and resignation, to bear what he sees right to inflict."

Seventh month 5th.—"I desire should I be restored to health to remember the bitter pain I have experienced. O! health is an invaluable blessing, when duly appreciated! May I be kept by the power of God, that my life may be spent to the praise of my Redeemer! He has given me a sight of great holiness, may I attain unto it!"

Eighth month.—"I have experienced that vain is the help of man, (however high his attainments,) to comfort and relieve us, when under the chastening hand of God. Surely if the Lord had not been on my side, I had fainted in my afflictions. O may I sink deeper and deeper into Christ, and all within me centre in '*Thy will be done.*'"

Ninth month, 24th.—"I have been much better in my health till within the last three days; and yesterday and to day I have been sweetly comforted with the presence of my gracious Redeemer, who appeared to permit me to hide my face, as in his holy bosom."

Tenth month, 2d.—"Had an acceptable visit from dear — who sweetly expressed her belief, that it was not in anger that my heavenly Father had afflicted me, but in mercy; reviving in my remembrance the language, 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' O may my blessed experience be, that from these heavy afflictions, I may be made a partaker of the holiness of my adorable and all-merciful Redeemer."

Twelfth month 18th—"It is my earnest desire, O my Redeemer! and I trust my prayer, that thou wilt give me patience and resignation to bear with fortitude all trials that still await me. O! be, I pray thee, with me, and keep me from anxiety as to the future; finding, as I do, that by it my present strength is diminished. I would be thine, a little plant growing by thy side, therefore flourishing. O keep, I pray, from all murmuring and discontented thoughts, and enable me whilst here to celebrate thy holy name, and hereafter to join the redeemed in ascribing to our heavenly Father, glory, honour, thanksgiving and praise, through thee our precious advocate."

Until the third month of the next year, her friends had entertained the hope that she would ultimately be restored to health, but, at that time, increased indisposition led them to apprehend a different result. The prospect of an early dismissal from the trials of time, was exceedingly joyful to her, yet she was very desirous not to feel impatient at her continuance here. At one time she requested one of her sisters to read from Taylor's 'Maternal Solicitude;' the 7th chapter was chosen: "A great multitude, which no man could number." She remarked, "Oh! how delightful to think of all meeting in heaven! is it not astonishing that so many should choose the broad way?" To which her sister replied, "that the very many snares and temptations that beset at every step the path of life, rendered it difficult to escape." Rachel then said, she did not think it so difficult when once the mind was made willing to serve the Lord, but that the half-Christian's was a most unhappy state, that she had tried it, and knew it to be so, remembering the time when she had thought it right to give up in faithfulness, to little intimations of duty, and had refused to comply, from the fear that if she did, greater requirings would follow; but this fear she now fully believed was caused by the insinuations of Satan, to make the pilgrimage Zionward the more difficult, but that he was a liar from the beginning, and would continue so to the end.

On another occasion, the doctrine of the Atonement having been the subject of their reading, she remarked, "How delightful is the idea to my mind, that the Lord was pleased to send his angel with a song of joyful news to mankind, made known to the shepherds whilst watching their flocks,—'Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.'" She further said, that in contemplating the sufferings of the dear Redeemer, she had felt how certain it was that he would not have endured the ignominy and shame he did, but for the redemption of man; so that those who are looking to him for salvation, may be assured of his love and mercy, and that he will not forsake them on a dying bed, for he hath purchased them with the price of his own blood. Still the little flock of Christ are often permitted to undergo feelings of deep humiliation and tribulation, but the Lord is pleased to appoint such dispensations for the spiritual benefit of all those who are exercised thereby. What a comfort is religion at such a time as this, when the poor mind has nothing else to cling to: to me it would be a great favour to be taken, yet it is an awful thing to die; an awful thing to appear before God; but we may re

member, it is not in our own righteousness we have to trust, but in Christ, who is 'the Lord our righteousness.'"

Speaking one evening of her departure, she said, although she was willing to leave her dearest friends, that she believed she had never loved them more; and again, "How sweet the thought of meeting our friends, and those whom we loved on earth, in heaven; but paramount to all, is the thought of seeing the dear Saviour, through whose love we receive the palm of victory."

As before observed, she wrote but little during the latter part of her illness. A few memoranda which were found after her decease, are as follow, and evince her unshaken dependence upon the rock of salvation.

Ninth month 4th.—"O God, thou art my God, I have trusted in thee, and am not confounded. Thou knowest the depth of the suffering and hidden conflicts of my soul, and how long they shall continue. I feel at times assured that thou wilt support me through them. May it be to the glory of thy grace, O Lord, my redeemer."

Ninth month 25th.—"The approach of another winter, and the probability of my continuance here, and spending it upon my couch, have contributed much to depress me, being also deprived of the sensible presence of Him whose presence giveth life—it giveth understanding to the simple. O may I be one, who simply desires to do and suffer the Saviour's will."

Twelfth month 2nd.—"How time rolls on: it is indeed wonderful: I may set up my Ebenezer, and say, 'hitherto hath the Lord helped me.'

'O to grace how great a debtor.'

When shall I have more faith to trust him, who in the midst of affliction remembers mercy."

Twelfth month.—"I am very low this morning, feeling like a cumberer of the ground. Oh, if this be the case as to the body, may my spiritual state be different; may I have faith to believe that I shall be mercifully cared for by Him who gave himself for me, and who has so abundantly supplied all my wants, even from my birth to the present moment."

First month 22nd.—Having just revived after a time of much pain and weakness, she repeated from Hebrews, "For ye are not come to the mount that might be touched," &c. "but to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel," repeating distinctly the intermediate verses. During the night, on one of her sisters handing her some refreshment, she said, "How thankful I ought to be, and I trust, am, that I have

every thing so bountifully provided for me ;” and asking for the Bible, opened it on the words “And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give,” &c. with a delighted and expressive countenance, then exclaimed, “that has been my experience, not one promise has failed ; the song of praise cannot be finished in time, it requires an eternity to celebrate it. The nearer I approach death, the more I see of his amazing love.”

Her sister, standing by her couch one morning, watching her pallid, but peaceful countenance, she remarked, that she felt better, and said, “Oh ! what a favour it is that I feel so calm at a time like this, and that the enemy is not permitted to throw any thing in my way ; but this is not the effect of merit from any works of righteousness that I have done, but through adorable mercy, wonderful, unmerited mercy ! The more I think of my own unworthiness, the more I am astonished in being favoured to believe that I shall be saved, and if I am saved, none need despair ! Oh, how wonderful that I should be permitted to enter into such a glorious rest ! When I am gone, I hope you will praise the Lord on my account.”

On the 27th, when relieved in a degree from distressing feelings, she said, “It is the Lord’s doing, praise Him in the heights and in the depths. It seemed said in me, ‘Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will hear thee, and thou shalt glorify me.’ I called upon him, and he has heard me ; in all my conflicts, I have never lost my confidence, though I have been tried as to a hair’s breadth.”

To some near relatives who came to see her, she remarked, in the course of conversation, that a mere historical knowledge of Christ was insufficient, and endeavoured to impress on their minds, the necessity of working out the “soul’s salvation, with fear and trembling,” in time of health, and not to defer seeking an interest in the Saviour, till laid on a sick bed ; desiring on her own account, to ascribe to him praise, honour, and glory, to whom alone they are due.

The general feeling of her mind, from this time was that of peace, often saying that she felt very happy, and that she could testify in reference to the Lord’s dealings with her, “Thou hast done all things well ;” repeating, “Oh ! house of Israel, trust in the Lord, he is their help and their shield ;” with many expressions of great thankfulness to her Heavenly Father for his love and mercy towards her, and longing for the time when it should please him to take her to his everlasting rest.

Twelfth month 31st.—She expressed herself thus—“I feel quiet and peaceful, as though the warfare were accomplished,

and the victory gained ; this is all the effect of my Saviour's love toward me ; none need despair, when one with a heart so opposed to that which is good, has found mercy."

Her mother remarking that it was a great favour to have the mind so supported, she assented saying, "it is all peace, all quiet ; it reminds me of that passage of Scripture, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee ;'" and afterwards added "It is of the Lord's mercy that I am not consumed, because his compassions fail not."

In speaking of the invaluable blessing of the Holy Scriptures, she said, they appeared to her more than ever beautiful, and that the language in John had been most sweetly impressed on her mind, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God ; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him,"—like Christ.

On the morning of the 13th of 1st month, she was seized with violent pain, and all the means of relief which were resorted to proved unavailing, but under all she continued perfectly calm, saying, "I am supported—pray, pray, pray, that patience may be continued unto me." The pain not abating, her brother was sent for ; he stood by her couch unperceived for some time, but when she saw him, she said, "John, oh the agony ! I am in excruciating pain ;" yet so remarkably was she supported that her countenance wore the same composure as when in a sweet sleep. She once more looked at her mother and emphatically said—"I feel the Saviour near."

She was then raised a little, and for some time rested on the arm of her brother, in which attitude she remained with her hands clasped, as if in earnest prayer, until her spirit was released without a struggle, at about half past eight o'clock, and we doubt not is entered into that rest, which she so greatly longed after ; through Him who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.

THE END.



THE
TEACHING OF THE SPIRIT,
EXEMPLIFIED
IN THE HISTORY OF TWO SLAVES.

THE work of the Holy Spirit is often seen in a remarkable manner exemplified in the poor, the illiterate and the oppressed among men. The martyrs and primitive converts were enabled by it to rejoice in tribulation, to count it all joy when they suffered persecution, to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, to forgive their enemies, to pray for them that despitefully used them, and to breathe forth for such, even whilst suffering the agonies of a cruel death at their hands, — ‘Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.’ The spirit which supported and instructed them, has not been withdrawn from the church, and we may occasionally observe it abasing those of the highest, or elevating those of the lowest conditions in life. In quietude and in humility it instructs its followers, strengthening them under multiplied sufferings and wrongs, to bear all, and to forgive all, in hope to obtain through faith and meekness the crown of life in the end. It is to set forth true religion operating in the poor, despised, and degraded slave, to show the spiritual nature of that gospel which is the power of God unto salvation, and its perfect adaptation to the lowest and most destitute condition in life, that we have been induced to prepare the following anecdotes, the truth of which we have verified.

Some years ago, E. H., a female minister of the Society of Friends, paid a religious visit through some of the Southern
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States. Places of public entertainment in those districts being rare, it not unfrequently happens that travellers are obliged either to trespass on the private hospitality of strangers, or to refresh themselves and horses by the road side, with such provisions as they may have brought with them. It so occurred to E. H. and her company whilst in North Carolina. They stopped by the side of a wood that their horses might feed; and during the detention thus occasioned, she discovered a small log hut in an adjoining thicket, which so forcibly attracted her mind as to induce her to visit it. When she reached the door she discovered an old coloured man, apparently about seventy years of age, sitting on a bench making shoes. Accosting him in a friendly way, she said, 'I think I will come in.' He immediately arose and presented her with a bench to sit on. In the course of the conversation which ensued, he informed her that he had a wife and five children, but that they were all separated from him, and that no two of his children were together, and none of them with his wife. The Friend expressed to him a little matter in the way of religious exhortation, at the conclusion of which he asked her if she would like to hear him give an account of himself. On her replying in the affirmative, he told her, that about twelve years before it had pleased God to visit him. That previously he had been very wicked, and that his master was cross, and the overseer cross. That having closed in with the visitations of Divine mercy, God had sweetened his bitter cup and rendered his rough path smooth. His bitter cup, he said, was parting with his wife and family, and the rough path was his slavery. At the mention of his bereavement he was much affected and his tears flowed freely, but he did not murmur or complain. During the whole of the conversation the old man kept diligently at his work. The Friend now inquired if he lived alone? He said, "yes! Nobody lives with me;—yet I am never alone. God never leaves me; 'cause I close in with visitation. He never leaves me. He changed the heart of massa to me; he changed the heart of overseer;—all 'cause I closed in with visitation." Observing him to make use of several texts of Scripture, the Friend said, 'thou canst read I find!' he replied, "no, I never read a word; but ever since I closed in with visitation, God helps my memory. Massa lets me go to church once in five weeks, and I can remember what the minister says, till I go again." In the course of the conversation he informed her that the overseer cut him out his work, which was a pair of shoes a day, and that as he usually was at his task by day-

light he often had it done before night. On her asking how he spent the remainder of his time, he said,—“well missus, I will tell you; I shut the door and go in that corner and wait upon God.” “In what way dost thou wait upon him?” “Will missus believe me?” “I will believe thee.” “I sometimes feel here” (laying his hand on his breast) “something that tells me to sing a hymn,—then I sing a hymn; sometimes I feel something that says you must pray,—and then I pray; and O missus, if the white people knew what good times I have in prayer, I tell you they would come and join me;—and sometimes I feel that I must wait upon God in silence. Missus knows about that.” On her inquiring after which of these different kinds of spiritual exercises he felt strongest, he replied—“Why missus you will think it mighty strange, but I feel the strongest when I have waited upon God in silence.” The Friend then made some remarks designed to encourage him to continue faithful to his blessed inward guide. On her concluding, he arose from his seat and took her hand saying—“Missus, we dont know what’s behind the curtain. I did not know God would send you here that we should have such good talk;—may you meet me in heaven.”

The next anecdote was related by W. R. a minister of the Gospel who visited this country from England a few years ago. He had been to North Carolina, and on his return to the Northern States, he tarried for the night at an inn, in Virginia, the landlord of which was a slave-holder. In the morning when the usual hour for proceeding on their journey came, his companion was not to be found. After waiting sometime, W. R. commenced a search for him, and at last discovered him discoursing with a coloured man at the stables. As W. drew near he felt that there was an unusual degree of solemnity about them, and on reaching them he found that his companion was bathed in tears. The latter afterwards informed him, that having felt an interest for the man, he had entered into conversation with him, whereby his feelings had been affected in a very remarkable manner. He had found him to be a slave belonging to their landlord; a poor, down-trodden, and severely used man, yet a humble, confiding, and dignified christian. The severity with which he had been treated, led him to use no invective against his oppressor, but as a christian he longed for his present peace and everlasting salvation. In the course of the conversation being asked if

he could read, he replied that he had been anxious to learn but could not accomplish it. This circumstance had for a long time given him much trouble;—but one day whilst engaged in his ordinary labour, he had an intimation, which was as a voice informing him, that he could read as well as others. By this he was much comforted, as he gathered therefrom that his own particular duties, and the will of the Most High concerning him, were as clearly unfolded to his mind as if he had been enabled to read them in a book. It was by obedience and close attention to that instruction thus pointed out to him, that he had witnessed a growth in christian experience, and that perfection in the spiritual graces which was manifest in him. “The heart must be kept clean,” he said.—“I love every body, and feel at times as if I could embrace every body. My master abuses me, but it would not do to hate him;—I love him,—I pray for him. If I was to hate him, I should be as bad as he is,—but I love him, I pray for him.” This was the doctrine unfolded in the secret of his soul. It is the genuine fruit of the Gospel, and in the purity and love it inculcates, may be found the spirit of the angelic song, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.’ That which instructed this illiterate slave that the heart must be kept clean, is the only power by which he could be enabled to effect it: That which bid him love his enemies, was that by which alone the natural aversions and resentments of our nature could be overcome; and that which led him to pray for them, is the one fountain from which all the streams of true and effectual prayer must flow. The heart of the listener had warmed as the slave spoke, he greeted him as a brother beloved, and felt that, poor and afflicted as he was, ignorant and deluded as others might esteem him to be, he had indeed truly attained to eminence in the school of Christ.

THE END.



THE
LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH
OF
GEORGE HARDY,
A COLOURED BOY.

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.—Acts, x. 34, 35.

DURING the winter of 1832, the writer of the narrative of which this account is an abridgment, became acquainted with Hannah Hardy, an interesting old coloured woman, and her son George. They were the suffering tenants of a miserable garret, lighted only by a few panes of glass, and ill-secured from the inclemencies of the weather.

Hannah had been an industrious woman, who supported herself comfortably for many years, until her sight, which had long been declining, so nearly left her, as to disqualify her for all kinds of work. George, who was her youngest son, disclosed in his earliest years great quickness of discernment and readiness of apprehension. He could read the Bible when only four years old, and continued to be remarkable for docility, and for preferring his books and other profitable employments to the idle sports of children.

When about eleven years old, he was placed from home, where he remained until four years since, when he became so much diseased with scrofula as to make it necessary to return to his mother. From that time she became his constant and only nurse, and evinced, through numberless privations and difficulties, the most unwearied attention and patient endurance.

He assisted her in dressing his sores which had attained such a height as to prevent his walking without the assistance of crutches. When he was able to sit up and to use his arms, he

made rope mats ; by which, with casual help from his friends he supported his mother and paid her rent. He used always to mend his own and her clothes, and allowed no time to pass idly away, which he was able to employ ; and so cheerful, so thankful, and so happy did this interesting couple appear, that it afforded a lesson of instruction to be with them.

Hannah, who could only distinguish the glare of noon from the gloom of darkness, had lived so long in the forlorn tenement they then inhabited, and knew so well all the turnings of its steep and dangerous stairs, that she could not bear to hear the proposal from some of her friends to provide one more comfortable. Through the latter part of winter, and the commencement of the spring, George's sufferings greatly increased ; he was confined wholly to his bed, and so emaciated was he with pain and disease, that although seventeen years of age, his arms were not thicker than an infant's.

He had been a diligent reader of the Holy Scriptures, and though he told me they had been to him a sealed book until he was brought to that bed of suffering, yet it was evident his mind had long been enabled to appropriate to its own necessities many of their precious precepts. Though he laboured under the combined effects of scrofula and dropsy, in their highest degrees of virulence, yet I never heard him repine, and often while suffering extreme bodily anguish, he would speak of the relief it afforded the poor afflicted body, to have the mind composed and tranquil, and would say, " Oh, I feel like a poor worm in the fire, yet all I desire is, to be favoured with patience to bear all my pain, and with a willing mind to wait the Master's will to take me away."

For many days and nights together he was able to obtain but little sleep. Yet he showed no marks of restlessness or discontent. Once calling me to his bed-side, he said, " I am afraid I am not patient enough, but I often feel very weary, and fear I shall wear my poor mother out. I am more concerned for her than for myself—what should I do for a care-taker, if she were gone ? She is very kind to me, and I have many kind friends. I am afraid I am not grateful enough for all my favours. To some, this garret would look like a dull place, but it never looks gloomy to me ; I have had more pleasure in it than I could have had in the nicest parlour."

Having called one day after he had passed a sleepless and languishing night, I found him, with the Bible fixed before him reading. He looked animated, and said, " I always loved to read the Bible, but I never understood it until very lately : now I understand it, and I find that religion and pleasure are in no

way inconsistent. I feel now that I shall never recover ; I am willing to die, and shall be happy when I am gone from earth—but the Lord is very merciful, and can make me happy so long as he chooses me to stay. I have trusted in him through pain and through want, and believe he will never forsake me. My faith has sometimes been closely tried, but I never let go my confidence.”

His disease now rapidly increased, and with it his suffering. On the 23d of Fifth-month, he conversed a long time with the doctor, and seemed more comfortable than usual ; but passed a sleepless and distressing night. The next day he was able to take but little nourishment, owing to the great soreness of his mouth and throat, but he could converse intelligibly and seemed anxious to do so. About two o'clock this day, I found him in great pain, but quite tranquil in mind. On my going to him, he said, “ my sufferings are now nearly over ; I shall not live many days—not more than two—the Lord's time has nearly come, and then he will take me where I shall never suffer any more—Oh, how marvellous his mercy is, to look down upon such a polluted sinner as I am—

“I the worst of sinners am,
But Jesus came to save me—

Yes, he will save me—I know it ! I have a hope—a pretty certain hope—Oh, it is a very certain hope ; it is a very sure hope.” He then, in a low and indistinct voice, supplicated for many minutes ; after which he said, “ I have been talking to my Saviour.” Not expecting him to hear, I asked his mother if he had always been a serious boy ; but before she could reply, George said, “ No ! I was always bad, always wicked ; but since I was brought to this bed of sickness, I have sought for repentance and I have found it : my sins were as scarlet, but now they are washed as white as snow : but it is all mercy, pure mercy—We have no righteousness of our own to depend upon : no works, no merit of our own will avail us at such a time as this. If these were all we had to look to, we should never be saved. But this is what Jesus came into the world for ; to save us poor sinners, and salvation belongs to him alone.”

After this, he desired me to read to him in the Bible—said he would like me to read in the Psalms, where David deplored his sins. I did so, and he afterwards composed himself and slept a few minutes ; but the pain soon awoke him, and he said, “ I hope my patience will hold out—I must not get impatient so near the end.”

On the 25th, his sufferings greatly increased, and on the afternoon of the 26th, he was unable longer to speak, but appeared sensible of what was passing, and to know those about him. He several times embraced his mother very tenderly, and wept.

The impress which the pain and anguish of the preceding day had left upon his countenance, now yielded to a placid and heavenly serenity; and his breath continued to shorten, until he ceased to breathe, about 12 o'clock on First-day morning.

Philadelphia, 5th Mo. 27th, 1832.

TEMPTATION RESISTED, AND HONESTY REWARDED.

A poor chimney-sweeper's boy was employed at the house of a lady of rank, to sweep the chimney of the room in which she usually dressed. When finding himself on the hearth of a richly furnished dressing-room, and perceiving no one there, he waited a few moments to take a view of the beautiful things in the apartment. A gold watch, richly set with diamonds, particularly caught his attention, and he could not forbear taking it in his hand. Immediately the wish arose in his mind, "Ah! if thou hadst such a one!" After a pause, he said to himself, "But if I take it I shall be a thief; and yet," continued he, "nobody would know it; nobody sees me—nobody! does not God see me who is present everywhere?" Overcome by these thoughts, a cold shivering seized him; "No!" said he, putting down the watch, "I had much rather be poor, and keep my good conscience, than rich, and become a rascal." At these words, he hastened back into the chimney. The lady, who was in the room adjoining, having overheard the conversation with himself, sent for him the next morning, and thus accosted him:—"My little friend, why did you not take the watch yesterday?" The boy fell on his knees, speechless and astonished. "I heard every thing you said;" continued her ladyship—"thank God for enabling you to resist this temptation, and be watchful over yourself for the future: from this moment you shall be in my service: I will both maintain and clothe you; nay, more, I will procure you good instruction, which will assist to guard you from the danger of similar temptations." The boy burst into tears; he was anxious to express his gratitude, but could not. The lady strictly kept her promise, and had the pleasure of seeing this poor chimney-sweeper grow up a good, pious, and intelligent man.

THE
GOVERNMENT
OF THE
TEMPER.



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GOVERNMENT OF THE TEMPER.

THE word *Temper* is usually employed to denote the prevailing spirit and disposition of the mind; so that the *Government* of the Temper comprehends that habitual regulation of all the feelings, whether transient or permanent, which is mostly favourable to the discharge of duty, and to the enjoyment and diffusion of happiness.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"—is the condensed and comprehensive precept, which embodies all the subordinate requirements essential to human happiness. Is it possible to love our neighbour without endeavouring to promote his peace and comfort? And shall we not strike at the very root of his peace and comfort if, in the hours of social intercourse, we exercise no control over our temper and spirit? There is a power in every individual, over the tranquillity of almost every individual. There are emotions latent in the minds of those whom we meet, which a few words of ours may at any time call forth; and the moral influence, which keeps this power over the uneasy feelings of others under due restraint, is not the least important of the moral influences, in its relation to general happiness.—There are minds which can delight in exercising this cruel sway, which rejoice in suggesting thoughts that may poison the confidence of friends, and render the very virtues that were loved, objects of suspicion to him who loved them. In the daily and hourly intercourse of human life, there are human beings, who exert their malicious skill in devising what subjects may be most likely to bring into the mind of him with whom they converse, the most mortifying remembrances;—and who are faithful in conveying to every one the whispers of unmerited scandal, of which, otherwise, he never would have heard, as he never could have suspected them; though they are careful to express sufficient indignation against the slanderer, and to bring forward as many grounds of suspicion against different individuals, as their fancy can call up. Can you conceive of more direct, or more degrading, or more malignant violations of the law,—“Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?”

If an unquiet and fretful temper be a source of perpetual annoyance to others, it is still more hostile to the bosom in which it dwells. It infixes the sting of a self-tormentor. It poisons the cup of every enjoyment. On the contrary, a spirit serene and contented has an habitual aptitude for delight, whenever pleasurable excitement occurs; and, even in the absence of all foreign excitement, has sources of internal delectation. This temper of mind, so desirable for its own sake, is intimately allied also with that fitness for the discharge of the various duties of life, without which they must become not only difficult, but in a high degree irksome and oppressive.

There prevails in society around us a disposition, of which we are scarcely entitled to complain, to compare and to contrast the man

of the world with the professor of serious religion, whenever it may be thought that the result of the comparison will prove disadvantageous to the latter. Shall there, then, be materials for eulogizing the character of those who make no pretensions to decided piety, on the ground of their amiableness of temper, and gentleness of spirit; and shall there be ground for an impeachment of those who make a public profession of religion, as in these respects greatly inferior? Shall it be said, with any colour of truth, that not a few of them betray a disposition unyielding and unkind, uncharitable and severe, irascible and unforgiving, arbitrary and impetuous? "My brethren, these things ought not so to be." They are incalculably injurious to the souls of men. They arm the carnal and unrenowned mind with all the force of the most determined prejudice, against those who lay claim to the character of separatists from an ungodly world, and also against that truth which they profess to embrace. Oh! never let it escape your remembrance, my Christian friends, that not only your own honour is at stake, but also the honour of the glorious cause of truth and holiness, to which you profess a devoted attachment. The honour of our Lord Jesus Christ requires you to adorn in all things the doctrine of his gospel; and how can it be more beautifully adorned, than by "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price?"—"Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and long-suffering;"—and over all these things, as the connecting girdle of this spiritual attire, put on the graceful and the attractive ornament of love. And let it be the love which "suffereth long and is kind; which envieth not; which vaunteth not itself; which is not puffed up; which doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things."

It seems to be the opinion of some, that a bad temper is an evil of such a nature, as almost to preclude the hope of amendment. This, however, is an opinion which would have disgraced a philosophic pagan; how much more a disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ! If it be the boast of philosophy, that it can effect much, and often has effected much, in the improvement of the natural temper, it is beyond all doubt the glory of Christianity, that it can effect, and often has effected, incomparably more.

Christian morals must have their foundation in Christian principles; and the effectual control of the temper must have its origin in the renovation of the heart, by the power of the regenerating Spirit. Not more true is it, that unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, than it is true, that except a man be born again, he cannot display "the mind which was in Christ Jesus." He may, indeed, on philosophic principles acquire a cer-

tain degree of control over the external indication of feelings, but never will the temper of his secret soul bear resemblance to that of our Divine Exemplar, or be conformed to the requirements of the law of love, unless it be formed and moulded by the influence of the gospel, and the power of renewing grace.

It is under this influence alone that genuine and unfeigned humility is cherished in any human heart; and where this grace of primary importance has no place in the mind, there can be no security for the due control of the temper, even for a single hour. Sins of temper usually spring from the sin of pride—that “root of bitterness” which produces so much bitter fruit. In every rank of life, man is apt greatly to overrate his own importance and his own claims. He is but the creature of yesterday;—a feeble, dependent, polluted, dying worm; and yet he is disposed to erect and elevate himself into a kind of subordinate deity; and, having thus idolized himself, to demand a correspondent homage from others. If they display not the respectful deference and the yielding spirit which he considers due to his character, or his station, or his talents, he betrays angry and indignant resentment. The apostle, therefore, strikes at the very root of the evil, in that admirable injunction which he addressed to the Philippian believers, and enforced by the example of our blessed Redeemer himself:—“Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.—Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

Perhaps there are no defects or feelings, to which, more frequently than those of temper, the mournful complaints are applicable, which an apostle thus poured forth: “That which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not: For the good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do.”

How powerful, then, is the inducement to pray without ceasing, that He who has all power over the spirit of man, would exert over our feelings a salutary control, and in the moment of exposure to unholy irritation and excitement, would preserve us in perfect peace! This entire control, it would be too much to expect from the unaided efforts of our own minds; but it is not too much to expect from the promised succour of the Holy Spirit, since it is expressly said, that “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, and meekness.” What are these attractive excellencies of character, but the very elements of the Christian temper? If these

then, are the communications of the Holy Spirit, surely the most direct and the most effectual method of attaining the government of the temper, is to seek, by earnest prayer, the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Distinguished in a high degree has been the success of some Christians, who have combined persevering prayer with persevering effort, to acquire an habitual command of temper. A very remarkable and edifying instance of this success is presented to our view, in the character of the eminently holy and useful John Fletcher of Madeley. "He was meek," says his biographer, "like his Master, as well as lowly in heart. Not that he was so by nature, but a man of strong passions, and prone to anger in particular; in-somuch that he has frequently spent the greater part of the night, bathed in tears, imploring victory over his own spirit. And he did not strive in vain. He did obtain the victory, in a very eminent degree. Yea, so thoroughly had grace subdued nature,—so fully was he renewed in the spirit of his mind,—that for many years before his death, I believe he was never observed by any one, friend or foe, to be out of temper, on any provocation whatever. The testimony that Bishop Burnet bears of Archbishop Leighton might be borne of him with equal propriety;—"After an intimate acquaintance with the Archbishop for many years, and after being with him by night and by day, at home and abroad, in public and in private; I must say, I never heard an idle word drop from his lips:—I never saw him in any temper in which I myself would not have wished to be found at death!"

There are two descriptions of evil temper which are equally to be deprecated and repressed. The one is the sullen temper, and the other the irascible. The former, if less violent, is more lasting; assuming too often the character of a gloomy, morose, and discontented habit of mind, effectually disqualifying the individual for all enjoyment, unfitting him for all society, and rendering him perfectly intractable. The latter, if less permanent, has an aspect still more alarming. How it distorts the expression of the countenance; how it disturbs the exercise of reason; how it degrades the character of a Christian; how it quenches and grieves the Spirit of love; how it amasses materials for self-reproach; how it exposes to consequences the most tremendous! In its fearful progress, it resembles the movement of a ponderous mass from the summit of a hill: at first, the motion is gradual and subject to some control; but the velocity is every instant accelerated, till the force it acquires in its descent bears down every interposing barrier, and bids defiance to all resistance. Seize then the golden opportunity while reason retains its power. Let an instantaneous ejaculation of the heart ascend to Him who heareth prayer, for the succour which he can promptly impart. Let there be, at least, the delay of a moment, before indulgence be conceded to the spirit of rising anger; and if even this brief interval be gained, there is some reason to hope

that the threatened and approaching paroxysm may be averted. A spark is more easily extinguished than a flame. "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger."—"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

"A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." While cutting words exasperate the individual against whom they are directed, they have the effect of stimulating to more tumultuous emotions the passion from which they spring. How often do we feel conscious, that our words are not only the utterance, but the instruments, and the excitements of thought; and if thus they operate when we use them mentally, how much more powerful must be their operation when we use them audibly! Our very tones of voice seem to have a power over our tones of feeling; and, by an instantaneous reaction, arising out of the mysterious sympathy and harmony of the inner and the outer man, they assume the character at once both of causes and effects. We are aware also, that when our feelings have not only been strongly excited, but also strongly expressed, we stand committed; we have taken a decided step, and we know not how to retract. The desire of consistency, at least in appearance, urges us to proceed; and into that desire there enters much of the spirit of pride. What abundant reason, then, have we to present the Psalmist's prayer:—"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips!"

Often does a regard to self-interest induce men to study the character of others. They deem it important to ascertain, what may be calculated to please, and what may have a tendency to disturb and to annoy. Of these discoveries, they find it beneficial to avail themselves, in order to extend the sphere of that influence which they know how to employ for the accomplishment of their sinister ends. Now shall we not study the character of those with whom we have intercourse, for nobler purposes, and from purer motives? It would be worthy of an enlightened disciple and follower of Jesus, thus to reason and reflect:—"I am aware that I have my own peculiarities of temper and of disposition; yet I am accustomed to expect from others some degree of indulgent kindness: is it not then incumbent on me to be kindly considerate and equally indulgent towards them? Shall I make an attack on that which I have reason to regard as the weakest and most vulnerable point, in the mental character of another? Shall I act towards one who has claims on my kindness, or towards any human being upon earth, the part of a tempter, by stirring up the dormant evil of the heart? Shall I elicit a spark, which I have reason to fear may soon enkindle a flame, or even produce an explosion? Oh, this would be to indulge the adversary of God and of man with a double triumph;—first, a triumph over myself, degraded into the character of a tempter; and then over a fellow-creature, whom, as though Satan's emissary, I have actually tempted and ensnared!"

Whenever there is the consciousness of having culpably given offence, let there be prompt and humble acknowledgments.—How proud and unsanctified is the spirit that cannot stoop to offer an apology, even when there is the secret consciousness that a humble acknowledgment is due ; and how fearful are often the consequences of a refusal ! What must be the standard of morals, and the criterion of right and wrong in that mind, in which the idea of *honour* is but little associated with the idea of *justice* ? What must be the state of the moral sense in the mind of that man, who persuades himself, that the law of honour demands resentment, when the law of justice requires concession ?

Most unwelcome, indeed, to human nature is the confession of a fault ; but the very pain is salutary ; both as it summons to the exercise of humility, and as it is calculated to deter from the repetition of the offence. It is unquestionably a Christian duty, for it is inculcated by apostolic authority in terms the most explicit. “ Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another ”—is the injunction of the Apostle James. And if this be a duty which we owe to man, it is also a duty which we owe to the blessed God. Be it remembered, that every sin against a fellow-creature is at the same time a sin against God, whose law requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves. Of all sin, without exception, it is said—“ He that covereth his sins shall not prosper ; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy.” The sins committed against our fellow-creatures should be humbly confessed both before them and before God ; for if either acknowledgment be withheld, there will be wanting the evidence that the other confession is sincere. “ If we confess our sins ”—as God requires us, with a humble and contrite heart—“ he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Perhaps we have sometimes heard from the lips of one who considered himself aggrieved and injured, such utterances of the heart as this :—“ I may forgive, but I cannot forget the offence.” And the attendant indications of feeling may have rendered it too evident, that the proffered forgiveness, while the language of the lips, was by no means the language of the heart. Is this the forgiveness which God requires us to exercise ? With such feelings as these in the heart, will a man venture before the throne of God, and offer that petition : “ Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us ? ” Would it satisfy our desires and tranquillize our consciences, that *such* forgiveness should be extended to *us*, by Him, at whose bar we must appear ? Can we entertain a hope, or even dare to offer a supplication, that to us, there should be remitted by God a debt of ten thousand talents if we have not the heart to remit a debt due to us from a fellow-creature of even a hundred pence ? “ How often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him,” asked Peter : “ till seven times ? Jesus saith unto him, I say

not unto thee, until seven times ; but until seventy times seven." It was on this occasion, that our Saviour gave to his disciples the affecting parable (to which allusion has now been made) of the debtor who hardened his heart against a fellow-servant, on whom he had an inconsiderable claim, although claims, to an immense extent, had been in his own case freely remitted by his Lord. "O thou wicked servant," well might his Lord exclaim, "shouldst not thou have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due to him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye, *from your hearts*, forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

O that we participated largely in the feelings of her whom Jesus himself commended, when he said, "Her sins which are many are forgiven ; for she loved much."—"Love *I* much?—I have much forgiven ;"—may every Christian say, while he examines the frame and temper of his spirit, and reflects on the vastness of his obligations. Surely if there dwelt in our hearts more of grateful love to Him by whose redeeming blood we obtain the forgiveness of our sins, it would become an easy, and even a delightful task, to extend forgiveness to others.

Finally, Let us reflect much, with a view to constant imitation, on the perfect and glorious example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"Dost thou well to be angry?"—is a question which you are sometimes, perhaps, disposed, like the petulant prophet, to answer in the affirmative, alleging the greatness of the provocation. At such a moment, call to mind the provocations offered to our Divine Redeemer. Think of the base ingratitude and the perpetual insults he endured. Think of the contradiction of sinners, and the revilings of blasphemers, he had to encounter, throughout the entire course of his suffering life, and especially when it was hastening to a close. Think of the irritating language with which he was assailed in the palace of Caiaphas, and in the hall of Pilate, and in the presence of Herod ; and then yield your minds to the force of the touching representations of the Apostle Peter : "If when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called ; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps : who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth : who, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not ; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." Let, then, that mind and that temper be in us which was also in Christ Jesus, to whom be glory and honour and ever-during praise !

MEMOIR

OF

SARAH LIDBETTER,

AGED NINE YEARS AND A HALF.

“ Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.”
Matt. xxi. 16.



PHILADELPHIA :

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MEMOIR.

SARAH LIDBETTER was the daughter of Bridger and Elizabeth Lidbetter, members of the religious Society of Friends, at Brighton, England. She was born at Denton, on the third of the third month, 1822. The following pages were principally written by her affectionate mother, who observes respecting her, "I doubt not but she has been thus early transplanted to bloom in a better soil, and to join with purified spirits in singing songs of praise unto the Lord God and the Lamb, for ever and ever."

She was, from a very little child, fond of reading the Holy Scriptures, and showed a decided preference for religious publications. "Piety Promoted," "Guide to True Peace," "Baxter's Saint's Rest," and "The Pilgrim's Progress," were among her favourite choice; and if at any time, as a reward for many useful services, which she cheerfully performed and took delight in, I presented her with an interesting book of tales, that were amusing and entertaining, although they were gratefully accepted, yet it was easily perceived, that unless the tales were strictly authentic, or the anecdotes of a religious tendency, they were laid aside, and seldom read a second time. She was of a very unassuming, diffident turn of mind; yet from occasional remarks made to me when alone, on any subject that had been discussed in her hearing, I soon found that her understanding was good, and that she was a child of quick perception and matured judgment. She much enjoyed our religious meetings, and spoke of having received comfort and instruction in attending them, even when held in silence. She was fond of retirement, and early experienced the comfort and advantage of secret prayer, endeavouring to bear in mind that she was always in the presence of her Heavenly Father. She was obedient, obliging, and affectionate to her parents, and orderly in her behaviour; and although a child of few words, she was beloved and respected by all who knew her, some of the neighbours holding her up as an example to their children. Her affectionate attentions to our other children; her tender manner of pleading with them, and reproving them when naughty, was truly

instructive : her usual expression was, "Thou wilt displease thy Heavenly Father." And her kind manner of encouraging them in well-doing, by giving them some little thing to stimulate them to be good, was very helpful to me, and often relieved me from the constant care I otherwise must have had over them. She was, in fact, like a little mother to them ; her conduct, more than words, evincing a mind guided and supported by Divine help and direction ; and that the love and goodness of her Heavenly Father were shed abroad in her heart.

I never remember her to have needed correction ; but when at any time she detected herself in error, her sorrow and grief were such as to require all the consolation and comfort I could give.

From the age of seven years, it was her daily practice to read a portion of the Holy Scriptures to the other children, endeavouring to impress it on their minds by asking them questions upon what they had heard ; this she continued until within about two months of her decease, having them around her bed, exhorting them (as she was become too weak herself to do so) that they should continue in the frequent practice of reading the Bible ; "which," she added, "is the best of books."

That she was, from early life, a child of prayer, I have no doubt, not only by remarks which she made in her illness, but from recollecting circumstances that occurred when very young and in health, which were not taken much notice of at the time. I remember her once asking me if I thought the Almighty always required that we should kneel when we pray. I said, "My dear, what makes thee ask me that?" She replied, "When I go to bed, and am in company with others, I do not like they should know when I pray." I said, "I believe every prayer that comes from a sincere heart is accepted, whether with or without form." She meekly answered, "So I think, mother."

When about eight years of age she was attacked with inflammation in her side, attended with a cough and other symptoms of a threatening nature, of which she seemed fully aware ; remarking one evening to a neighbour's daughter, who came to sit with her, that although she should have liked to live and help her mother, and be a comfort to her—"yet," she added, "if I die, I shall only go out of a wicked world, where there are many troubles and temptations." Her patience during this illness was

remarked by all who witnessed it, and proved an alleviation and comfort to my mind under this afflicting dispensation.

My dear child so far recovered at this time, that her countenance had the appearance of health, and she was able to go with the other children to the school, which being in a large room and airy situation, appeared, for a short time, to improve her health. She took great pleasure in attending this school, and enjoyed looking at the Scripture lessons which are hung round the room, telling me they often cheered and comforted her when left by herself during the dinner and play hour, as she was too weak and delicate to join the other children in their play-ground the whole of the time. She spoke with grateful feelings of the instruction she received from the questions that were put to the children after reading a chapter, which is the usual practice twice a day; considering it a privilege to be able to learn and hear others repeat several chapters and hymns; the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah was one that she much enjoyed.

About this time she spent several first-day evenings with her grandmother, reading to her in the Bible, and books of a religious character. These were seasons of mutual comfort and pleasure; the stillness she enjoyed at her grandmother's was very congenial both to the state of her body and mind, and she often called it "The quiet house."

At the beginning of the present year, my beloved child was again visited with illness of a far more distressing and painful nature; yet her anxiety to render herself useful to me, and, as she said, to live and repay me for the trouble I had had with her, occasioned her, for some time after her symptoms were of a doubtful nature, to look forward with hope to being restored to health. This caused me to feel anxious, as I wished her to be quite aware of her state; but this was removed by her saying to me, as we were sitting together one first-day: "Mother, which would thou rather see me, in perfect health, enjoying the pleasures of this world, or afflicted and suffering, and as I now am?" I replied, "My dear, far rather as thou now art." She said, "Oh! so would I; so would I;" and added, "Mother, I have for some time wished and prayed to be resigned to die, and this evening I have been made to believe that I shall soon die, and am so happy to feel I am quite resigned to die; thou canst not think how happy it makes me. I feel

so full of joy to think I am going out of this wicked world into heaven, to my Saviour. Oh, mother! it seems as if a heavenly voice said, 'The gates of heaven will be open to receive thee.' How glad I am—how thankful I am!"

After this time her mind seemed wholly engaged with the prospect for some days; and a few memorandums will serve to show how afflicted, yet how patient and resigned to the will of her Heavenly Father, this dear lamb was favoured to become.

My precious Sarah was exceedingly affectionate and dutiful in her attentions to me, ever anxious to enter into my feelings and cares; nor could I conceal from her penetrating eye any trial or care that oppressed me; nor would she leave me at such times one minute to myself, and it was in vain to offer her amusement of any kind, until she had discovered the cause of my uneasiness, when her counsel and advice, and her tender sympathy, even at the age of eight years, often afforded comfort and encouragement, that would in a great measure remove a weight from my mind, and cause me, at those seasons, to believe that all was for good. Yes, we have often mingled our tears, and, I may add, our prayers together for support, on such occasions.

During the last three months of my dear child's illness, a brother of my husband's assisted him in the shop, &c., which set me at liberty to attend to her, night and day. We read much in books of a religious nature, and especially in the Bible, which she most of all delighted in; and about this time she expressed much concern on account of the Jews, lamenting their want of belief in the Saviour, saying, "What should I do without a Saviour now? Oh! how much they miss—What a sad thing—cannot something be done for them?"

For some weeks, her limbs were paralysed from the violence of her complaint, and her sufferings extreme, so much so that the physician and surgeon remarked that they never witnessed a child to live and endure such suffering; and attributed it to her quietness, and great patience—yet never did a murmur escape her lips, but she often remarked, when her patience was noticed, "I have never once thought my situation hard, I have not one pain too many." Her dear grandmother being present, she said, "Grandmother, how much longer dost thou think I shall be here; what is thy opinion?" Her grandmother replied in words to this effect,

"We know, my dear, the time will *soon* come, but no one can possibly say when." She quickly added, "Never mind how long; a crown of glory is worth waiting for." She imparted suitable advice to those who attended her in her protracted illness, often expressing, in grateful terms, her acknowledgment of their kindness.

On questioning her, one day, as to the state of her mind, she said,

"All gracious Lord, whate'er my lot
At other times may be,
I welcome now the heaviest grief,
Which brings me nearer Thee."

This is the state of my mind at this time, mother." At one time, when I was grieving over her accumulated sufferings, she said, "Mother, I seem to think this is not all on my account; but I believe thou wilt live to see for whom, or why, I have suffered so long." When, in the night, she has had sharp spasms in her side, so that the perspiration has run down her face, she has, with a sweet smile, said, "Mother, how these pains remind me of the sufferings of my Saviour!" She was very averse to taking any medicine of a composing tendency, lest it should affect her senses, which she was earnestly desirous might be preserved to the end, whatever should be her sufferings; but it being quite needful for her to have a powerful anodyne at times, when convulsed and in great pain, she gratefully acquiesced, and would ask for it when she felt the convulsions were approaching, being desirous of lessening my care and trouble either of body or mind, on her account. My beloved child much enjoyed the company of two kind cousins, who were almost her daily visitors, remarking, that although she felt too weak at times to speak to them, yet, she said, "it feels very pleasant to see them and other friends, and I enjoy their company." One of them once expressed her desire that she might become entirely resigned to the will of her Heavenly Father, whether it might be to live or die, and that she might experience the everlasting arms of Divine love underneath to support her through all her sufferings—tenderly inquiring, if she did not experience this. She meekly replied, "I don't know that I do;" when her cousin encouraged her by saying, "I have no doubt, dear, but thou wilt; these feelings are not at our command." Some time after this, having been fa-

voured to partake largely of the sweet feeling of Divine support, when in much pain, and also entire resignation to her Heavenly Father's will, she said, "Now, dear mother, if cousin was here, I could join with her and tell her (what she all along seemed to think would be the case,) that I have experienced what it is to be resigned, and to feel, as it were, my Saviour's arms open to receive me; this makes me feel very thankful and happy."

About three weeks before her death, she had her sister, her little brother, and two young relations, who lived with us, around her bed; to each of which she gave much suitable advice, part of which is as follows. Addressing the elder of them, aged eight years, she said, with much earnestness: "I am very soon going to die, and perhaps may not be able to speak to thee again; and although thou sees me so ill, I am very happy indeed, for I know that I am going to my Heavenly Father in heaven, among happy angels, who are constantly singing praises, and so happy, and where I shall see my dear Saviour, whom I love, face to face. Now I want thee to be a good boy, that when thou dies, thou may be permitted to meet me there; but there must be a great change in thee, for thou art very naughty; thou must pray earnestly to thy Heavenly Father to make thee a better boy; and never tell stories, or fight, for these ways are very displeasing to thy Heavenly Father. I do not remember ever to have told a story, or hurt any body, but I have often sinned, and sin will follow us while in this world; but I prayed to my Heavenly Father very earnestly, and kept on until I was forgiven, so that now I have nothing to trouble me; and sometimes am so happy, I seem as if I could sing for joy. So try to be a good boy, and read the Bible very often, and pray to be made a good boy; for what a sad thing it would be, when thou dies, to see me happy among holy angels, and for thee to be miserable in the wicked place, shut away for ever. Now, Thomas, wilt thou try to pray earnestly to thy Heavenly Father? for He can and will make thee a good boy, if thou pray to Him, and try to love and fear Him and serve Him; think of this when I am gone, often think to thyself how happy I must be in Heaven—that will help thee to try to be good—and there is nothing in this world that can make thee happy."

Then looking towards her sister with a lovely smile, she said, "Betsey, I believe I am very soon going to my Hea-

venly Father in Heaven; in such a beautiful place, among happy angels, who wear crowns on their heads, and are always singing praises—won't that be delightful? And there I shall be quite well, never sick any more, nor grieve any more, nor do wrong any more. Shouldst thou like me to go there out of all my suffering, and shouldst thou not like some time to meet me there, with our dear mother, and all our dear relations in that beautiful place? Well, then, thou must be a good girl, and never tell stories, nor give thy mind to be proud, nor give way to thy temper, but pray to thy Heavenly Father very often indeed, to make thee a good girl, and love good things, and read thy Bible, and pray when thou reads there, then thou wilt learn many things; and as thou wilt be mother's oldest daughter, when I am gone, thou must try to comfort her; and when thou sees her tried, (for mother has many trials,) thou must look about, and see what thou canst do to help her, and be very good to her, and pray for her, as I used to do; and never want any thing she refuses, for mother does a great deal for us, and we want a good deal of money for shoes and food; so thou must be satisfied with what thou hast; take care of the children, and then thy Heavenly Father will love thee, and as thou prays to Him, He will make thee grow better and better; and when thou art laid on a bed of sickness, He will make it easy to thee. See how He enables me to bear my sufferings, and how happy I am, because I know I am soon going to Him. So thou wilt try and remember what I have said to thee, dear, won't thou? and then thou wilt some day come to me in Heaven, where we shall never have to part again, and be so happy for ever."

To her cousin, a little girl about six years of age, she affectionately said, "Dost thou know I am going to die? I am very glad, because I shall be happy; I shall go to Heaven, where I shall see my Heavenly Father, and his holy angels that sing so beautifully, and where I shall be so happy, and where I shall never more suffer pain. Should thou like to meet me there, in that beautiful, happy place, some day, when it pleases Providence thou should die? Well, then, thou must be a good girl; now thou art a little child, and knows but very little, so if thou wish to grow a good girl, thou must be humble and be very attentive when mother talks to thee, or reads to thee, or any other friends; that will be the way for thee to learn a good

deal; and try to remember their advice, and always think, if thou art doing any thing wrong, that if my mother does not see thee, thy Heavenly Father sees, and can punish thee much more than mother, for He can make thee very miserable here, and when thou dies He can cast thee into the wicked place—how shocking that would be! But if thou art good, thou wilt go to Heaven and be happy, but thou must pray very much—thou art old enough to pray—thou knows how to ask mother for any nice thing, and so thou knows how to ask thy Heavenly Father to make thee good, and that is praying; and when thou art old enough, thou must read the Holy Scriptures very much, and they will teach thee a great deal. Dost thou understand me? Well, then, try to think of it when I am gone, and never tell stories, or be sly, for that will grow, and thou wilt get worse and worse, if thou dost not try to pray to have thy temper changed;—and thou wishes to be good, don't thou? Well, then, thy Heavenly Father will make thee good if thou pray to Him." She also spoke in a sweet, kind manner to her little brother, but my feelings were so overcome that I could not take it in writing.

Once she said, "dear mother, this has been a day of prayer for thee, that thou mayst be supported through all; do not grieve for me when I am taken." I told her I hoped I should not; she replied, "I know thou wilt feel it much, but I have prayed for thee to be supported; as to myself, I seem to have nothing to do but to wait my dismissal; I think the words in my mind are, 'I am preparing a mansion for thee,' so I have no cause to be unhappy." She much enjoyed having the Bible and other books, and hymns read to her, and selected several passages and verses, which she requested me to write on cards, with her love to several of her near relations; to be sealed up and delivered to them after her decease, as mementos of her regard. One morning as the children were preparing to go out, and planning their amusements for the day, one observed, "that will be a change;" dear Sarah looked at me, but not in a fretful or impatient manner, and said, "there is no change for me, but from one pain to another; the spasm, the cold fit, the fever, and convulsion." I said, "No, my dear, there is not indeed;" but she quickly replied, "All will be made up in the end." After two or three days, she said, "Mother, how grieved I have felt, that I should have suffered such a murmuring word to es-

cape me." I said, "What word, my dear? I have not heard thee murmur." She replied, "Oh yes! I said, no change for me, the other day; how wrong—when I am so soon to have so glorious a change."

On fifth-day, the 18th of eighth month, when the whole length of the spine was much inflamed, she said, "Oh! my dear mother, the pain, the pain in my back is extreme, pray for me; oh! my dear, my gracious Saviour, if it be thy holy will, take me to thyself, or give me patience to endure this suffering;" this she repeated several times, and added, "Oh! my beloved mother, if my prayer is not heard—I seem as if I could not pray; what, if after all, I should be turned out, and go among the wicked, what shall I do? Oh! my dear mother, there seems a doubt, do pray for me." The perspiration flowed at the thought, and she exclaimed, "But, oh! my dear, my own Heavenly Father, take me to thyself." On my saying that I believed this to be a temptation of the enemy, who was permitted at times to tempt Christians almost to the last, she became quiet, and after a time of silence, she sweetly smiled, and soon after, in an extacy of joy, she exclaimed, "Oh mother! now I can pray; how comforted I feel that I can pray! I know not how to be thankful enough for this favour; the word in me is, 'I will deliver thee from the power of the enemy, and take thee shortly into Heaven.' How happy I am," she added, in a feeble voice, "I believe the worst of my sufferings are over; I do not know how to be thankful enough to my Heavenly Father for ease; I feel so happy I am able to pray; and though you cannot hear me, that does not matter; though my lips do not utter, I pray inwardly." After remaining some time in this happy state, she said, "Oh that great enemy, I hope he will not again be suffered to tempt me; I seem to think I have gone through the worst."

On sixth-day, the 19th, my beloved child, after a quiet, but sleepless night, being free from those acute spasms and convulsive throes, from which she had lately suffered so much, appeared unusually low. I was led anxiously to inquire the cause, when, after a little reluctance, and shedding many tears, she said, "I believe I am better, and perhaps likely to live some time longer, this is a great trial to me; oh! the impatience I suffer to be gone; oh! pray for me, that I may get rid of such anxious thoughts, for how wrong it must be to feel so impatient; oh! that my faith

and patience may hold out to the end." After this she enjoyed some hours of calm, and smiling, said, "Mother, now I seem not to mind pain; and though sharp, I can rejoice in the midst of it; I feel so sure it will be well with me, and so comforted in thinking, that every pain makes me weaker, and brings me nearer Heaven." At another time she said, "Oh! my dear mother, the Heavenly voice says, (for I think it is,) 'Thy day's work is done, thou hast only to wait.' Oh! how full of love I feel for my dear Saviour! it seems his arms are open! how I long to rush into them, and embrace Him for the happiness I this moment enjoy; I am happier now than I have ever been; oh! how thankful I ought to be. He seems to say, I am preparing a mansion for thee: all my will is gone, I have no will but to wait His time, *that* is the best time." Soon after, "Mother, how I feel for thee, the separation will be keen, very keen. I have asked my cousins to come and see thee, and comfort thee, and have no doubt they will do their best; but *pray*, dear mother; that is the best way; God is the best friend. I've no doubt it will be made up to thee. When ill, if thou should have to feel much pain, think of me; think how it has been made up to me, how every pain is made up in the joy I now feel." About a week before her decease, she said, "Thou hast had a good night, my beloved mother; I am thankful for that, now thou wilt be refreshed."

As she drew nearer the close, her weakness and difficulty of respiration, which almost seemed to threaten suffocation for several days before the event, increased her wish to be gone; and her anxious inquiry of her medical attendants, "How long do you think I shall last?" was very affecting. On one of them remarking, "You have lived, my dear, much longer than I expected," she said, "Dost thou think I shall go through the week?" describing her various symptoms to him. On his replying, "It is not likely you will," she said to me, when he left, "Oh, mother! it felt as if my hands would clap together of themselves for joy!" yet her desire for faith and patience to hold out to the end, was very strong, and she would often request those about her to pray that they might not fail.

On seventh-day afternoon, the third of ninth month, she requested me to come to her bed-side, saying, "Mother, I believe my breath is going, give me a sweet kiss, and send for my dear father and uncle up stairs, that I may bid

them farewell." This being done, she took an affectionate leave of them, and then said; "I feel cold chills in my chest, are they not the cold chills of death?" She then repeated,

"That voice, oh! believer, shall cheer and protect thee,
When the cold chill of death thy frail bosom invades."

She then described some symptoms, which she thought indicated speedy dissolution; but soon added, "I will say no more of these feelings, they may make me shrink at death, which I do not wish to do." Soon after, she said, "Farewell, my dearly beloved mother, if I should go in my sleep, as I feel very heavy for sleep." She dozed until within five minutes of her death, and agreeably to her earnest prayer, that whatever pain she might endure, she might be favoured to retain her senses to the last, so she was enabled to speak with her latest breath, for on her saying her head was uneasy, I remarked, "My dear, thou art just entering glory," when she, with a smile and an inquiry, "Am I?" ceased to breathe, without a struggle, or even a sigh. Thus died this lovely, pious child, on the day she was nine years and a half old.

May these memorandums prove an incitement to those into whose hands they may come, to attend to the Divine injunction, "Be ye also ready;" that so, whether sooner or later, they are called to leave this world, they may at that solemn period, like her, "have only to wait" to be received into the arms of our blessed Redeemer.

THE END.

A

MEMOIR

OF

MARY JANE GRAHAM.



PHILADELPHIA.

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NO. 50, NORTH FOURTH STREET

A MEMOIR, &c.

"THE works of the Lord are great ; sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." Elevated, indeed, is the Christian's pleasure in seeking out the great works of creation. But it is the work of redemption which mainly attracts his delighted contemplation, as the mirror in which the glory of his God and Saviour is most fully unveiled before him. The following sketch presents a striking manifestation of Divine power and grace, and is fraught with edifying and instructive lessons.

Mary Jane Graham, who was born in London, in the year 1803, was the subject of early religious convictions. The first remarkable visitation of Divine love to her soul, appears from an account she has left, to have occurred when she was only seven years of age. She was taken by a pious servant to visit one of the almshouses belonging to Rowland Hill. As she was departing, an old woman took her affectionately by the hand, and said to her, "My dear child, make the Lord Jesus your friend, now that you are young ; and when you come to be as old as I am, He'll never leave you nor forsake you." These words took hold of the child's heart, and she walked home in silence, thinking how she might get Jesus to be her friend. She remembered how often she had slighted this dear Saviour ; how she had read of Him in the Bible, and been wearied of the subject : how she had passed days, weeks and months, without thinking of Him : how she had loved her play, her books, her toys, and her play-fellows—all, all, better than Jesus. Thus convinced of sin, she made many efforts in her own strength to be a good girl, which failed. But as she presented her petitions to the Lord Jesus, he heard and made himself known to her soul. The following is her own account of this period, and is extracted from a letter written towards the close of her life. It will be observed she speaks of herself in the third person. "The Lord Jesus put it into her heart to read the Bible, of which, though she understood not all, she gathered enough to give her some comfort. One day her attention was fixed on these words, 'The Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.' Now something that could take away sin, was what this little girl wanted, and she asked her father to tell her who this Lamb of God was. He explained the precious verse. But who can describe the raptures which filled the bosom of this little child, when made to comprehend that the 'blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin.' Now she fled to Jesus indeed,

Now she knew that he had loved her, and given himself for her; now the Spirit of God, who often 'chooseth the weak and foolish things of the world, to confound the wise and mighty,' 'shed abroad the love of God in the heart' of a weak and foolish child, and filled her with peace and joy in believing. She had no one to whom she could talk of these things; but she held sweet converse with her reconciled God and Father; and gladly would she have quitted this life to dwell with Jesus!"

She was a most amiable, affectionate and dutiful child, seldom needing correction, tender-hearted when told of faults, and by her general kindness of disposition attaching all the members of the household to her. Her quickness of mind was a subject of early observation. She was seldom without a book in her hand, and seemed never so happy as when employing herself in the improvement of her mind. Yet this thoughtful cast of character was by no means tinged with gloom. In all the harmless games of childhood, none of her companions excelled her in playful activity; whilst in the midst of her cheerfulness, it was abundantly evident that the main concern of religion was uppermost in her mind. For as occasion offered, even when quite young, she would attempt talking with them about religion. Such was her character in childhood, such it appeared as she advanced in years; and her fond parents esteemed her all that their hearts could wish. But she was yet to exemplify the necessity of our taking heed to the apostolic injunction, "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

The foolish vanities of the world began to captivate her heart. She lost ground rapidly, and secret backsliding was followed by open frivolity. She turned from this only to seek relief in intellectual pursuits. All the sources of self-gratification were resorted to with the fruitless attempt of obtaining peace in a course of departure from God. Wearied at length with disappointment, this prodigal child began to be in want; and many a wishful eye did she cast towards the rich provision of her Father's forsaken house. In turning, however, to religion for comfort, she found, to use her own words, "Alas! I had no religion; I had refused to give glory to the Lord my God, and now my feet were left to stumble upon the dark mountains."

Though she had once known and loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity, she began to doubt. His divinity became a stumbling-block and a rock of offence. She was no longer the humble child, seeking spiritual food and consolation from Him: but she was a determined caviller, who with a secret heart of unbelief investigates to find reasons for disobedience. She

says : " My understanding was convinced that the Scriptures were divine ; but my heart refused to receive the conviction. The more my reason was compelled to assent to their truth, the more secretly I disliked the doctrines of the Bible." Continued resistance to conviction was the natural and melancholy result of this inquiry. She endeavoured to strengthen her mind by pursuing a course of intellectual study, with the direct design of preserving herself from becoming a dupe to cunningly devised fables. The immediate effects of these studies were decidedly injurious. Their absorbing interest diverted her mind from the main subject of inquiry, while they proved a temporary refuge from the uneasy disturbance of her conscience.

Through the Divine mercy, this state of infatuation did not last long. One evening she had been engaged in considering the starry heavens, and her mind was led to reflect on the immense stretch of intellect, by which man had made them the object of his knowledge. In an instant the thought arose in her mind—" What signifies the knowledge of these things, so long as man knows not God who made him !" In her darkest hour, the belief of the being of a God had not wholly forsaken her ; yet now the conviction seemed to flash on her for the first time. She saw and lamented her folly in having been content with the knowledge of the glorious and beautiful works of creation, while she was unmindful of the surpassing glory and beauty there must be in its God. Love and obedience to him, she now saw, must not only be the happiness but was the indispensable duty of his creature. Her convictions of sin were strong, but tended to despondency, being unconnected with any discovery of the way of forgiveness. Every fresh sense of the corruption of her heart, and of the unsullied purity of the Divine character, brought with it a corresponding sense of guilt. She could not conceive the consistency of her forgiveness with the claim of Divine justice. In this dilemma she applied to her Bible. " But oh, how different," she observes, " was the temper of mind, in which I now addressed myself to its perusal, from that in which I had read it in the commencement of my disbelief of Christianity ! I was no longer a proud sophist, triumphant in the strength and penetration of human reason, and in the comprehensiveness of human knowledge. The contemplation of my own ignorance, weakness and wickedness, had laid my pride in the dust. My eyes were opened to view myself as I really was—depraved and blinded in my reason, judgment and understanding. And this is the process which must take place in the soul of every man, before he can pursue the search after truth in a right spirit."

Her interest was early directed to the promises of Divine teaching to the sincere inquirer after truth. Their suitableness fixed her attention ; their freeness encouraged her heart. ‘ Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find : ’ ‘ He giveth his Holy Spirit to them that ask him ; ’—especially arrested her. She determined to make trial of them, conscious that their fulfilment in her own case would be a test of the truth of the book which held them forth for her acceptance. Though deterred at first by a sense of unworthiness, she ventured to apply, justly considering, that whatever might be her apprehensions of her own demerit, yet a state of submission and desire could not be so displeasing to God, as one of carelessness and rebellion. But the description of this anxious crisis must be given in her own striking words.

“ Impelled by these reflections—fearful and uncertain, but with uncontrollable, unutterable longings, I directed my applications ‘ to the unknown God.’ Oh, my Redeemer ! I rushed into the presence of my Judge, without a Mediator. But doubtless, even then, thy comeliness was thrown over the deformity of my soul ; and the eye of my Father beheld me with pity, for thy dear name’s sake. My prayer ascended up to heaven, fragrant with the incense of thy merits ; though the poor wretch who offered it, thought to please God by leaving thee out of it.”

In this prostration of soul, she continued “ watching daily at her Lord’s gate, waiting at the posts of his doors.” It need scarcely be added, she did not seek in vain. The Divine character now appeared before her, not as before, in its consuming holiness, but in the combined glory of holiness and love. Her apprehensions of sin, of Christ, and of the whole system of Christian truth, were now irradiated with heavenly light ; and with simplicity and godly sincerity of heart, she was enabled to believe unto righteousness.

“ I examined,” she says, “ the character of Jesus, as unfolded in the Bible, but with all my scrutiny I could not find even so much as an inconsistency. To describe a character without any glaring defects is a comparatively easy task ; but to describe one which should be consistent in all its parts, appeared to me utterly impossible to a being so inconsistent as man ; especially a character so singular as this, whose distinguishing points are directly contrary to the distinguishing points of man’s character in general. Like the Pharisees, (though, I trust, in a far different spirit) I lay in wait to “ catch Jesus in his words.” Often did I fancy that I had met with something at which I might reasonably be offended ; but that Holy Spirit, who did already begin to take of

the things of Jesus and show them unto me, always led me in the end to perceive that the offence was occasioned by my gross ignorance and vitiated judgment of spiritual things. As each difficulty was successively cleared up; my admiration arose almost to ecstasy; and my doubts were lost in a deep and loving confidence, till, at length, after many of these trials, I could, when any thing seemed strange to me, go to Jesus himself, and sitting down at his feet, as a little child, expect from him a solution of the mystery. I no longer exclaimed, This is contrary to *reason*, I will not *believe*; but, This surpasses my *comprehension*, I cannot *understand*; Lord, teach thy ignorant and foolish creature what this means.

“ Now I discovered the reason, which had so long prevented me from receiving the truth as it is in Jesus, and from finding in the Scriptures those treasures of wisdom and gladness which they contain. ‘ They that be whole, need not a Physician, but they that are sick.’ So long as I knew not that my soul was infected with the dreadful malady of sin, it was not possible for me to appreciate His love, who came to save me from my sins; but when the Holy Spirit taught me that I was utterly undone and unclean, then the knowledge of Him, who is able to save to the utmost, ‘ and whose blood cleanseth from all sin,’ became the only cordial which could relieve my fainting spirits. From that moment I ceased to stumble at the doctrine of the Cross. I was a sinner—I wanted a Saviour. In Jesus Christ I found all my wants satisfied. I fled for refuge to this hope, which had been thus unexpectedly set before me. Into his hands I have committed my spirit, and I know that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him. The more I studied His divine character, the more I grew up, as it were, into its simplicity and holiness, the more my understanding was enabled to shake off those sinful and slavish prejudices, which had hindered me from appreciating its excellence. Truly his words were dearer to me ‘ than my necessary food.’ He was my ‘ All in all.’ I did not want to have any knowledge, goodness or strength, independently of him. I had rather be ‘ accepted in the Beloved,’ than received (had that been possible) upon the score of my own merits. I had rather walk leaning upon his arm, than have a stock of strength given me to perform the journey alone. To learn as a fool of Christ; this was better to me than to have the knowledge of an angel to find out things for myself. Nor is there any thing in all this contrary to reason. For as the highest wisdom of a little child is to learn implicitly of its teacher; so I, having found a teacher and guide, whose intelligence was above mine or an angel’s, it was my business ‘ to learn im-

plicity of him, and to submit my mind to his, secure that I should thus attain the highest end of a created being.

"I was sensible that a vast revolution had been effected in my temper, views and dispositions. For this I should have been at a loss to account, had not the Holy Scriptures furnished me with a solution of the mystery. 'If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.'

"The external evidences of Christianity, though I now perceived all their force, were no longer necessary to my conviction. I need no proofs to convince me that the sun is shining at mid-day. I needed none to convince me that the love of my reconciled God and Father was shining full upon my soul, with an enlightening, purifying and vivifying influence. When objections assailed me, I found myself much in the situation of the man, who opposed to all the cavils of the Jews, this simple, yet irresistible answer. '*Whether these things be as you say, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.*' From that time I have continued to sit at the feet of Jesus, and to hear his word; taking him for my Teacher and Guide in things temporal as well as spiritual. He has found in me a disciple so slow of comprehension, so prone to forget his lessons, and to act in opposition to his commands, that were he not infinitely 'meek and lowly in heart,' he would long ago have cast me off in anger. But he still continues to bear with me, and to give me 'line upon line, and precept upon precept.' And I am certain that he will never leave me nor forsake me; for though I am variable and inconstant, with him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

After her recovery from this fearful snare of Satan, she was mercifully preserved from 'turning again to folly,' and led forth in the path of the just, with increasing light, strength and establishment. Depending upon the teaching of the Spirit of God, her path in Divine knowledge became as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. During her short life she was indefatigable in the employment of her talents for the good of others. She wrote and published a work called the "Test of Truth;" the great object of which was to set forth her own case, as a beacon of warning, an example of encouragement, and a monument of Divine Grace, for the special use of those who might be brought into the same seductive atmosphere of temptation.

Of a powerful and cultivated mind, her intellectual habits were a source of much gratification to her; but it was delightful to observe her Christian simplicity and watchfulness

to subordinate these valuable enjoyments to the primary object of the glory of God.

The period of her illness embraced a large portion of her life. From her childhood, her health was delicate ; and a long illness, which occasioned her leaving school, left a debility in her constitution, from which she suffered, more or less, to the end of life. Violent pains in her head, chest and side, appeared, however, to be the commencement of that disease, which gradually developed a fatal character. From about her twentieth year, except in the year 1827, when she changed her residence, she never moved beyond the garden, and only two or three times ventured into the outward air. For the last two years she was entirely confined to her room, and unable to be dressed. She generally kept her bed, till within the last seven or eight months, when a violent cough, and spasms in the heart, prevented a reclining position, except when she was compelled to return to it by fainting and exhaustion. The only resource was a chair well supported with pillows, in which she sat up day and night, and from which the assistance of three persons was required to remove her during the last few weeks of her life.

As her illness evidently approached its termination, her employments assumed a character more exclusively spiritual. She was occupied in girding up her loins, and trimming her lamp, in constant and delighted expectation of her Lord's immediate coming.

And now it was, that the Christian graces which had been matured in the school of affliction, and under the influence of habitual communion with her God, displayed more manifestly their holiness, beauty and consolation.

The following letter, written in the immediate prospect of eternity, is valuable, as an exhibition of those views of the gospel, which will alone stay the soul in perfect peace at that awful juncture.

“July 5, 1830.

“I find, my beloved friend, that in death no past good works, no holy endeavours or desires, can give the least comfort, except as evidences that we have been accepted for Christ's sake. My sole confidence is—that I have cast my poor guilty soul entirely, and without reserve, on the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus ; casting far from me every other hope. My good works—where are they ? I can remember none. They are too poor to think of without the profoundest humiliation. My desires and endeavours—O my dear friend, they are, indeed, ‘coverings too narrow for any one to wrap themselves in,’ at the moment of entering into the presence of God. But my

Saviour hath clothed me with his perfect righteousness, and I wrap myself round in it with unspeakable feelings of security. I examine it on every side, and find it 'perfect and entire, wanting nothing.' I am not afraid in this my wedding garment, to appear even before the King of kings. I think I hear my Saviour perpetually saying to me—"Not for thy sake do I this, be it known unto thee; be ashamed and confounded for thine own ways." A sinful worm. My Jehovah, my Righteousness, my Tower and Strength, my Rock of defence, my Sun, and my Shield, my complete Salvation—O may he be your God and Guide, for ever and ever."

She was usually favoured throughout the last months of her life with a remarkable sense of the Divine presence. During times of extreme agony, "Christ," she said, "is with me, 'touched with the feeling of mine infirmities.'" Her intercourse with God at this solemn season, while it was most intimate, was yet *most hallowed*. One evening, after a day of great bodily suffering, her cousin went into her chamber to take leave of her for the night. The room was darkened, and perfectly quiet; and the state of her soul seemed to accord with the outer tranquillity. She said—"I can scarcely speak to you. The sense of the presence of God is so powerful, that it almost overcomes me. He has often manifested himself to me; but never in such a manner as this night. Indeed I feel ready to exclaim with Job—"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee.'" She said very little more, being evidently too deeply impressed to converse; but her cousin adds—"I shall never forget that night."

Yet this sacredness of feeling was mingled with *cheerful delight*. It was truly Hooker's 'reverend gaiety'—"Oh!" said she one day to a friend, "he gives me to speak to him 'face to face;' and sometimes, when I am so weak that I cannot utter words, his 'Spirit helpeth my infirmities, and maketh intercession for me with groanings that cannot be uttered.' I love to feel my weakness, that I may experience 'his strength made perfect in weakness.' I delight to lie low before him."

She loved to speak of the character of God. Her mind appeared to be much expanded in the contemplation of his unsearchable nature and glorious perfections. "How delightful," she observed on one occasion, "to think that 'God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.' All his dispensations are light; and though now they seem dark to us, hereafter, all clouds will be dispelled."

The concentration of all her thoughts upon eternity was peculiarly striking and edifying to those around her. This

main concern for the last few months of her life absorbed her entire interest. Nothing unconnected with it seemed to possess any claim upon her attention. The engrossing delights of intellectual study were relinquished for ever. She had no enjoyment of any train of conversation, except that which directly led her mind and contemplation heavenward. Communion with God was the one object of her desire.

The same warm temper of love to the Lord's people that had distinguished her general profession was ruling to the last. Even in her state of distressing weakness, she could not be satisfied without seeing some of them round her bed, that she might enjoy sensible communion with them. However weak they might be in faith, or low in condition, her heart was fervently drawn out in union with them. In referring to some refreshing intercourse with two eminent Christians, she observed—"How good my gracious God is in thus sending his saints to commune with me upon those deep and precious things which now form my only consolation—my 'joy and the rejoicing of my heart.' But"—added she—acknowledging the supremacy of her heavenly Friend—"after all, His presence is the only unfailing source of happiness. 'With him is the fountain of life; in his light shall we see light.'"

The expressions of her deep humility, were peculiarly striking during her illness. All her attainments in the Christian life were never thought of, but as dross and dung. Her sense of unprofitableness kept her low in the dust, while the recollections of faith, exercised in habitual application to the blood of her Redeemer, upheld her from despondency.

Her self-abasing apprehension was, however, combined with ardent gratitude to God as the author, and to her friends as the channel, of all her mercies. Every attention, every act of kindness from her parents and nurses, excited the most lively emotions of thankfulness. Speaking one day of the kindness of her nurses, a friend observed,—“But oh! how kind, how much kinder *is Christ.*” “Yes”—she replied—“but even all this kindness of the creature flows to me *through his love, his kindness.*” Thus did all her earthly comforts receive a double relish—thus also were her bitterest trials sweetened by being traced up to their Divine source, and by flowing into her soul through the delightful channel of the mediation of her Saviour.

Such was her enjoyment at some seasons of agony—that her “pains,” as she said on one occasion, “were sweeter than honey or the honey-comb.” At one of her times of distress she remarked—“I am a child lying in the arms of Christ, and he treats me with more than a mother's tenderness.”

It is almost needless to add as the concluding article of detail—that the sting of death was removed from her.

“It is not death to me”—she would say, “Jesus hath tasted death for me, and hath drunk up all its bitterness.” Her frequent reference to her departure was in calm composure—like making preparation for a short journey, or a temporary absence. At other times it was in joyful hope. On one occasion—six months before her death—when she was thought to be dying, she unexpectedly revived, and, seeing her weeping friends around her, asked her dear mother why they were all in tears—adding with great animation—“Do you think that I shall be with Jesus to-morrow?” At another of these times, she exclaimed, “If the Lord should come and take me this night—but, oh! that is too much to hope for.” After a violent attack of coughing and spasm, a friend observed—“I fear you suffer much.” “Oh, no!” she replied, “I delight to feel the pins of the tabernacle taking out.”

For a short time, however, before her death, the enemy was permitted to harass her soul, and her lively apprehensions of the gospel were occasionally obscured. At one of these times she said to a friend, “Christ is not so precious to me as he deserves.” “No,” it was replied, “he is so to none.” “But she added, “he ‘feeds me with food convenient for me,’ though I do not experience those spiritual enjoyments I so ardently long for.” At another time she remarked, that often in the experience of the Lord’s servants, a season of darkness had preceded some special manifestation of his love.

The dark clouds which ‘for a small moment’ had been permitted to spread themselves over her soul, were however shortly dispelled; and ‘at evening time it was light.’ Her extreme weakness indeed prevented much utterance; but the few words that could be gathered from her, were descriptive of the peace and joy that reigned within. “My weakness,” she said, “reposes on his strength—my folly on his wisdom.” When a friend, in allusion to her late painful exercises, observed, “God was ‘leading her *by the right way* to the city of habitation,’” she replied—“O! yes—but how different is the case of those, who ‘wander in the wilderness in a solitary way, and *find no city to dwell in!*’” In the last visit of this beloved attendant, “God”—she said to him—“is the rock of my salvation.” Then speaking of her being detained in her earthly tabernacle—she added—“It is a comfort to think that ‘Christ has the keys of death and of hell.’ All is well. May God be with you, during the remainder of your pilgrimage! I can only lie as an infant in the hands of God.”

Her bodily sufferings at the last period were most severe, arising from a complication of diseases. Her lungs, which had been supposed to be sound, were discovered after her death to be fatally diseased. Her heart also was found to be enlarged. Her weakness and inability to recline for so many weeks, produced dropsy in her feet and legs. This was, however, from time to time relieved by incision. Her life terminated at last by a rapid mortification in one of her legs. The last day of her life was a day of intense agony. She was obliged to take doses of opium, which before she could not touch, so that the day and night, till she expired, were passed in a doze, or in the most violent suffering. A few words only were preserved at this affecting crisis. A day or two before her death, she cried—"Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly; nevertheless 'not my will, but thine be done.'" At another time, speaking of "the glory that shall be revealed"—she exclaimed—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Alluding to those who watched by her side, she said—"What a comfort that we are not watching alone! 'He that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep.'" Then again, shortly after, "I know whom I have believed." Then again, in a moment of excruciating suffering, to her mother, "Pray for me, that my patience may not fail me at the last." The last words she was heard to utter before her death in a moment of deep agony were, "I am come into deep waters; O God my rock, 'hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.'" The next morning, December 10, 1830, without a sigh or struggle, she entered into her eternal rest.

Thus upheld by the good hope of the gospel—thus having displayed in lovely concord the diversified graces of the Christian profession—thus having been abundantly refreshed by the consolations of Christ, this blessed sufferer, this ransomed sinner, this victorious believer, fell asleep in the arms of her Saviour and her God. She heard, and gladly obeyed the call of her Lord—"Come up hither." "Lay down the cross, and take the crown."

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father in his throne."

THE

PRINCIPLES OF PEACE

EXEMPLIFIED.



PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY THE TRACT ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS

AND TO BE HAD AT THEIR DEPOSITORY,

NO. 50, NORTH FOURTH STREET.

THE
PRINCIPLES OF PEACE
EXEMPLIFIED.

It is generally known, that an objection to take part in war, in any shape, forms one of the tenets of the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers. This objection is purely religious, and is founded upon what they conceive to be the spirit of the Gospel Dispensation, as it is illustrated in the precepts of Christ and his apostles, and exemplified in their practice. They consider that it must follow, as a necessary consequence, that a religion, breathing peace and good-will to men, cannot, in any case, be supported by the spirit of war. They believe that, on the contrary, the practice of this evil among the professors of Christianity, has tended more than any other circumstance, to prevent its propagation in the world, to tarnish its excellency in the eyes of Jews and Pagans, and to confirm their speculative and practical errors. As it was not by the secular arm, but in direct opposition to the sword, that it obtained an entrance in the minds of men, and was first promulgated, so they believe, that its final establishment in the nations of the earth, will be effected through the medium of the softening influence of its pacific spirit, and by the glorious example of peace and concord among its followers.

In the year 1798, the rebellion in Ireland afforded a striking occasion to the members of this society, who are scattered abroad in different parts of that kingdom, to put the efficacy of their peaceful principles to the test. It is, however, to be presumed, that even if outward preservation had not been experienced, they who conscientiously take the maxims of peace for the rule of their conduct, would hold it not less their duty to conform to these principles, because the reward of such as endeavour to act in obedience to their Divine Master's will, is not always to be looked for in the present life. Long before the awful period arrived, they had seen a spirit of contention working in the minds of the people, and it appeared obvious, that as deep-seated animosity was concentrating its forces on either side, nothing short of a dreadful conflict could extinguish

their mutual hatred in mutual slaughter. A considerable time previous to the breaking out of the rebellion, the society recommended to its members, that all who had guns or other weapons in their possession, should destroy them; in order, as was stated by the Yearly Meeting, "to prevent their being made use of to the destruction of any of our fellow-creatures, and more fully and clearly to support our peaceable and Christian testimony in these perilous times." A little after this, when the government ordered all arms to be given up to the magistrates, it was a source of satisfaction to many, that in a general way, the members of the society were found to be without any such thing in their possession.

As the state of public affairs was drawing nearer to a crisis, the situation of the society, especially of those who resided in the vicinity of the contending parties, was a subject of deep and awful solicitude to its feeling members; and many individuals had the efficacy of their religious principles against war put in various ways to a severe proof. A Friend residing in the village of Ferns, in the county of Wexford, observing, that on the eve of the insurrection, a melancholy silence prevailed, inquired of a person if there was any thing more than usual in prospect, and was told the country people were collecting in large bodies. At this intelligence, a cloud of darkness, as he described it, overspread his mind, and he was brought into a state of unutterable distress. He knew, indeed, that he had endeavoured to place his dependence upon an Almighty protector; but the feelings natural to every human being possessed of a Christian, peaceable disposition, at the prospect of the gulf that was opening to thousands of his misguided fellow-creatures, of the ruin and desolation about to fall upon his country, and of imminent danger to himself and his family, produced for some hours a conflict of which he found it impossible to convey an adequate idea, and almost beyond what he seemed able to endure. At midnight the town was filled with consternation; guards and divisions of the army were placed in different quarters; and the protestant inhabitants were in continual terror. He prevailed upon his family to retire to bed, but they could not sleep; yet they endeavoured to attain that solemn retirement of soul, in which it is best prepared to meet the calamities of life, and to rely on the mercy and power of Omnipotence. In the morning the scene was very awful, the houses and stacks of corn were in flames in every direction around them, some being set on fire by the yeomanry, and some by their enemies, so that, between the two parties, total devastation seemed to be at hand. The protestant inhabitants

were fleeing into the towns and villages for safety, some of them wounded, and bringing the news of others that were slain. Property was then of little account, for it was every one's concern to escape with his life. The military left the town in the evening, and with them the protestants, both those who came in for safety, and those who resided there.

The next morning it was filled with an ungovernable multitude of many thousands of United Irishmen, in pursuit of the army. The Friend's house was soon filled with them, when, to his astonishment and humbling admiration, instead of the massacre he and his family had dreaded, they were met by caresses and marks of friendship; the insurgents declaring that they intended them no injury, but would fight for, and protect them. Several of the poor protestants, mostly women, returning homeward to the villages which they had deserted when the army left, came to the Friend's door as persons who had no dwelling-place. They stood in the street, looking up and down in all the eloquence of silent distress. Though he had but small accommodations, his heart and house were both open to the afflicted, and notwithstanding the severe threatenings of the then ruling party, for entertaining those to whom they were hostile, he and his family endeavoured to accommodate all they could, without distinction. This was also the case in the houses of most other members of the society in any way exposed to the contending parties. During the continuance of the struggle, their houses appeared to be marked out for places of entertainment. They were almost constantly full day and night; and it was matter of surprise that their provisions held out as they did, to the end of the conflict. The members of the society, and some of the then oppressed party, conveyed provisions to one another privately. The United men sometimes offered part of their own stock, but when it was known to be plunder, or, as it was called, 'the spoils of war,' the Friends declined to accept it; and it was evident that such refusal was mostly taken in the light of an offence. From the number of United men who came to lodge almost every night in Friends' houses, they were in continual danger of falling a prey to the king's army, if it should make an attack on the town, and on the other hand, the Friends were continually threatened by the pikemen, for not turning out the poor fugitive protestant women and their children, who had taken shelter under their roof. But though they appeared to be in danger, according to human apprehension, from both parties, they were, in fact, alternately protected by both. Some of them came one morning to a Friend, and told him his house was to be burned that day in consequence of his refusal to turn

out the protestant woman that were in it. He replied, that if they did so, he could not help it, but that as long as he had a house he would keep it open to succour the distressed, and if they burned it for that reason, he must only turn out along with them, and share their affliction. It so happened that this was the regular day on which the meeting for worship of the society in that quarter was to be held, about a mile from Ferns, and notwithstanding the alarming denunciation, he considered it his duty to take his family with him to meeting, leaving his home with a heavy heart, as he expected soon to be without a habitation, as well as the means of present support. On his return to Ferns, however, he was rejoiced to see his dwelling entire, and his heart was filled with praises and thankfulness to the good Providence that had preserved it. Whatever might have been the reason that prevented them from executing the threat, their evil disposition towards him on that account seemed to be changed, for they did not make any requisition of the kind afterwards. Throughout the calamity, it was his uniform experience, that the more he attended to what he conceived to be right, in his own conduct, the more he seemed to be respected by them. Even when he remonstrated with them on account of the cruelties committed by their party, they quietly listened, and frequently acknowledged the wrong. A party of the king's army came to Ferns, to disperse the United Irishmen who held possession of the place. On hearing that they were coming in, the Friend stood at his own door, lest he should be suspected of being an enemy. When the military came near, one of the soldiers stepping out of the ranks, presented a gun to his breast, and was on the point of drawing the trigger, when the Friend called to him to "*desist from murder.*" The soldier, like one struck with amazement, immediately let the gun fall from his shoulder, and presently his officers interfered for the Friend's protection; whose life was thus preserved as on the right hand and on the left.

Notwithstanding Friends belonging to the same meeting were in some instances several miles distant from each other, they did not suffer their perplexities at home to interfere with the sacred duty of religious worship abroad, or to prevent them from traversing the country filled with armed men, amidst dangers if possible still greater than those they had left, in order that they might assemble together for this solemn purpose. Consequently, in going to and returning from their meetings, they had to encounter many difficulties, besides the struggle between their faith and their natural fears in leaving their houses and property, a prey, perhaps, to pillage or to flames.

during their absence. Human prudence it is likely would have induced them in such an awful extremity to remain at home, and to look after their outward affairs ; but the sense of what they owed to their Maker, and to the society of which they were members, in many instances overbalanced these selfish considerations, and it appears, that in most cases, they left behind them a better guardian than human prudence. On one occasion, a family received notice, that unless they gave up the attendance of meetings, and united in the Roman Catholic form of worship, they should individually be put to death, and their houses should be burned. As the following was to be their day of public worship, the heads of the family were brought under deep mental exercise, accompanied with fervent prayers that they might be enabled to come to a right determination in the conflict between their religious duty on one side, and apprehensions for the safety of their family on the other. On collecting the individuals together, with a degree of humble confidence that the best direction would be afforded, after a little solemn retirement, they laid the matter before their children. The noble and intrepid language of their eldest son, then a very young man, on this memorable occasion, is worthy of being recorded. " Father," said he, " rejoice that we are found worthy to suffer." His parents were much affected, and their minds so much strengthened in consequence, that they immediately concluded to attend their meeting next day. In the morning they proceeded to their place of worship accordingly, without seeking to avoid the armed insurgents by going into the fields ; but keeping the public high-road, they were permitted to accomplish their purpose in safety, and expressed the satisfaction they felt in having thus fulfilled what they considered to be their duty. They were not then apprised of the circumstance which in the mean time had occurred, that the king's army had entered into that part of the country, and it so disconcerted the plans of the insurgents, that they were prevented from carrying their wicked designs into execution.

A signal preservation was also experienced by another Friend. His house, which was situated in rather a lonely part of the country, was ransacked and stripped of every thing valuable by a party of insurgents. Some hours after the depredation, another party entered for the same purpose, and the captain, discrediting the Friend's simple statement of what had already occurred, or irritated at the disappointment, raised his sword to murder him ; when his wife, rising from her seat, with much emotion and firmness exclaimed, " thou canst not touch a hair of my husband's head unless Divine Providence permit

thee." The man was so struck by her Christian fortitude, that he let the sword drop from his hand, and stooping to pick it up, without uttering a word he turned away, and quietly withdrew his men.

A person of great respectability in the County of Westmeath, living in a wild, thinly inhabited district, not far from the town of Moate, has given the following striking testimony, from his own observations at that period. "All those in this quarter, *who professed principles of peace*, were marvellously spared from extreme suffering; some living in solitary places, surrounded by that class who were generally in a state of rebellion. Some so circumstanced could not leave their usual habitations, though strongly urged by their few protestant neighbours to flee with them to the garrison towns. Oh, the heart-rending scenes some such have witnessed, their neighbours running hither and thither with their families and goods, and calling upon them to flee from certain destruction. Yet some were favoured with faith and patience to abide in their lots, conscientiously adhering to the revealed law of their God, and thus did experience, to their humbling admiration, the name of the Lord to be a strong tower, in which they found safety. I could with wonder, love and praise, relate some marvellous deliverances mercifully vouchsafed to me, when surrounded by bodies of armed men, and when no human being of any other description was near; yet through divine aid, and that alone, was I enabled to refuse to take up arms, or take their oaths, or join them, assigning as a reason that I could not fight nor swear for or against them. They threatened, they pondered, they debated, marvelled, and ultimately liberated me, though they said I was in the power of many thousands then assembled."

A Friend living in a retired part of the county of Waterford, had a large family of young children, and kept several servants. A little before the battle of Ross, two of the nursery maids, Roman Catholics, left the house. This circumstance gave some alarm to the family, which was however mitigated in degree by their return after the battle, in which the United Irishmen were defeated. The mistress interrogated the elder of the servants, respecting their reasons for thus leaving the family at such a time, and in a state of such distress, and represented their ingratitude after having experienced so many marks of kindness from their master and mistress, during a period of some years' servitude. The girl acknowledged it all with many tears; but added, "mistress, if you knew all, you would not condemn us." Some days after, her mistress spoke to her

again, and requested her to be more explicit, because she did not understand what was meant by the words, "If you knew all," &c.; and on urging the subject in a very kind manner, the servant burst into tears, and acknowledged that she and her fellow-servant, had been enjoined by an authority to which they had been accustomed to yield implicit obedience, "if the battle of Ross was favourable to the Irish, to kill the young children, and this," said she, "we could not do, you had been like tender and kind parents to us, and the children we love as our own, and therefore we determined to leave the house, never to return any more, if the battle should be favourable to the Irish."

The following account was communicated by a valuable Friend, who felt himself placed in a situation which exposed him to a kind of trial, different in many respects from what others had to experience, in support of the testimony against war. It not only shows the delicacy of those religious feelings which may arise in truly devoted minds, and the benefit of yielding them faithful obedience, but may afford a useful lesson to others, to attend to the pointings of duty in themselves, even when their nearest friends may not see things exactly in the same light. "At the time when we were under the power of the military, and the civil authority suspended, the town of C—— was threatened, or in expectation of being attacked. On walking out one morning, I observed posted up in various places, a printed order from the general in the following terms: 'In case of alarm in the night, the inhabitants are required to place lights in the middle stories of their houses. The most severe and instantaneous punishment will be inflicted on such as neglect to comply with the order.' A cloud of distress came over my mind on reading this notice. I knew that 'light in the windows,' was that the soldiers might discern the enemy, and be able to fight; and that the '*most severe and instantaneous punishment*,' was a license to the soldiers to put all instantly to death, where this order was not complied with. As I could not fight myself, I found I dare not hold a light for another to fight for me. This would be taking a more active part in a contest than I was easy to do, and how to act was a nice and difficult point. I informed Friends how I felt, but I found they did not all see alike, and few thought themselves so restricted as I did. At length, after a few days, I felt inclined to go to the general myself, and asking a friend to accompany me, I went. He received us in a civil manner, and patiently heard me, whilst I told him that as I could not fight myself, I was not easy to hold a candle for another to do it for

me. I believe he perceived the distress of my mind, and the first thing he said, was, 'I think it is a pity you did not let me know your uneasiness sooner.' He said he had issued the order as consistent with his duty as commanding officer, and having issued it he could not well rescind it now, but said, if I would furnish him with the names of such Friends as were uneasy to comply with the order, and where they lived, he would endeavour to have them protected in case of alarm. I told him, that perhaps there were some who could not say till the time of trial came, how far they might be easy to comply or not, and then it would be too late. Then with much condescension and kindness, he desired me to furnish him with the names of all the members of the society in town, and he would endeavour that they should not suffer for non-compliance with his order. This I complied with, but the town not being attacked, the general's kind intentions were not called forth. It was however, I thought, a memorable circumstance, that a general in the midst of commotion, should so patiently listen to my reasons for not complying with his order, and promise as far as he could to protect us. As well as I can now remember, he went so far as to say, he did not think he should have issued the order just as he did, if he knew it would have given Friends so much uneasiness."

In this variety of circumstances, and of perils, to which they were exposed, it is natural enough to inquire whether the society lost any of its members. We are enabled to answer this question by an authentic document, issued by the Yearly Meeting of Dublin, which contains the following passage. "It is worthy of commemoration, and cause of humble thankfulness to the Preserver of men, that amidst the carnage and destruction which frequently prevailed in some parts, and notwithstanding the jeopardy in which some Friends stood every hour, and that they had frequently to pass through violent and enraged men, in going to, and returning from our religious meetings, which, with very few exceptions, were constantly kept up, that the lives of the members of our society were so signally preserved." And in the same document, an extract is given from the epistle from the Yearly Meeting held in Dublin in 1801, addressed to the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia, which states, that "It was cause of grateful acknowledgment to the God and Father of all our mercies, that in retrospection to that gloomy season, when in some places, Friends did not know but that every day would be their last, seeing and hearing of so many of their neighbours being put to death, that no member of our society fell a sacrifice in that way but one

young man." That an exception should thus be made of one young man, in the accidents or allotments of a society composed of some thousands, is in itself a remarkable occurrence; and every one must be desirous to know under what circumstances the death of this individual took place. There are some cases in which an apparent exception confirms the law, and we are much mistaken, if, in this particular instance, the very exception will not be found to establish the principle, so far from weakening its practical force. This young man, apprehending that his life was in danger, and that he could find no means of protection but in outward means of defence, took up the resolution accordingly to put on a military uniform and to associate with armed men. He told his connexions that they would all be murdered if they remained in such a defenceless state in the country, and taking with him some papers of consequence, he fled to a neighbouring garrison town. But it so happened, that the very town he chose, as a place of refuge, was attacked and taken by the insurgents; and from the most credible information that can be collected, it appears that when the contest was over, and he was wantonly firing out of a window upon them, the door of the house was forced open by the enraged enemy; and, in terror of his life, he sought to conceal himself in an upper chamber, where he was soon discovered and put to death.

By the afflictive circumstances attendant on war, many who had been in comfortable situations were greatly reduced, and left almost destitute; to provide for their wants, a voluntary subscription was raised in Ireland, in which Friends of England and the United States of America freely offered to join; but their aid was not needed; so much was raised, that a part had to be returned to the subscribers.

Without question, it must afford a pleasing reflection to every humane mind, that a Religious Society, conformably to the analogy of the outward body, should, in this way, suffer and sympathise in the sufferings of all its members; and, though dispersed over a nation, should constitute, as it were, but a single family, bound together by common interests.

Viewed abstractedly as the effect of a benevolent Christian economy, practised in a particular Society, the fact must also be a source of gratification, that strangers even in distant countries, should offer their kind assistance to those in need. For, we are told, that the Friends in England, and even in America, requested permission to send their contributions, should they be required.

But, contemplating the fact, as if the same principles of con-

duct might be made applicable to the whole Christian community, how consoling and animating would the prospect be, of all the members of the Christian church, however scattered, and however divided by minute shades of opinion, being brought to unite in the bond of peace, in a common desire to do each other good, to obey the same rule, and to adopt in their practice the same principles !

It would require no great stretch of faith to believe, that conduct like this would lead them to a union which no earthly power could shake, and that Jews, Mahometans, and Pagans would bow down with reverence to the spirit of Christianity, and surrender their might before the excellency of such a peaceful dominion. Because, these, constituting part of the human family, and therefore objects of this Catholic benevolence, would receive from their Christian neighbours such lessons of peace and good will, as would imbue them with kind dispositions, and take away all evil intentions from their minds.

It could not injure any, whatever might be their opinions with regard to the necessity of war, to study with deep attention the moral effect of this Christian spirit of universal charity ; which has thus a tendency to unite together nations, kindreds and people, as children of one parent, and servants of one Lord,—“ thinking no evil,” “ forbearing one another,” “ loving one another,” “ preferring one another,” “ seeking the good of all ;” and to compare it with the opposite spirit, which is ever busy in discovering faults, in awakening evil surmisings, in sowing the seeds of contention, and setting man at variance with man, in kindling the flame of war, and promoting the misery, demoralization and destruction of the human race. How can we conceive it possible that these opposite dispositions should ever be brought to coincide in the *perfect* character, the true disciple of Jesus Christ.

Is it possible that the same individual can be actuated at the same time by the maxims and principles of peace, and the maxims and principles of war ? But if these are incompatible, and war could be tolerated under the Christian code ; then the maxims and principles of peace, might be dispensed with under the same code. Where shall we find the authority for thus stripping off the distinguishing badge of the Christian, that he may be fitted for the field of battle ? There is no such authority : it is opposed by every rule and maxim, by every law and principle in the New Testament. Consequently, the maxims and principles of peace cannot, under any circumstances, be dispensed with ; and warlike habits and dispositions are entirely incompatible with the meek and forgiving spirit of

Christianity. The rule of expediency, as it is called, may promise much : and men may employ their sophistry in attempting to reconcile the two characters. But calculations of present advantage, can never be admitted to form a part of the motives by which a Christian should be governed ; nor will he, who, in simplicity of heart, wishes to follow the example of a meek and forgiving Saviour, with faithful obedience to his laws, and humble confidence in his divine protection, ever be justified in forsaking the direct and straight-forward course of integrity though life and property may seem to be at stake, for the serpentine mazes of a wily policy, by which he might bring himself to think that he could secure these transitory blessings.

The following extract from Ramond's travels in the Pyrenees, contains some reflections that are worthy of being added. Speaking of the Spanish smugglers, he says, " These smugglers are familiarised at all times with peril, and march in the very face of death, and certainly would be a subject of dread to most travellers ; for where are they to be dreaded more than in deserts, where crime has no earthly witness, and the feeble no assistance ? As for myself, *alone and unarmed*, I have met them without anxiety, and have accompanied them without fear. Armed, I should have been their enemy, unarmed they have respected me. In such expectation I have long since laid aside all menacing apparatus whatever ; the man of peace among mankind, has a much more sacred defence, his character." When such feelings as these arise in the breast of a man, who simply from outward observation, is led to view human nature as a compound of good and evil, that may be conciliated by kindness, and aggrieved by the contrary, how strong in the eyes of a Christian must be the sanction of principles, derived from the spirit of his holy religion, whose direct object is to cherish such benevolent dispositions as would lead to universal peace and harmony in the world, if men would suffer themselves to be influenced by them in their conduct towards each other.

THE END.

ACCOUNT
OF
CHARLES DUNSDON,
OF
SEMINGTON, WILTSHIRE,
ENGLAND.



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BRIEF MEMOIR
OF
CHARLES DUNSDON.

THE subject of the following pages was born the 27th of eleventh month, 1799, at Steeple Ashton, a rural and secluded village in the vicinity of the populous manufacturing district of Wiltshire.

Before he had completed his sixth year, he was left, by the death of his parents, to the care of his elder sister, to whose authority he yielded a ready obedience. He was taught to read and write at a day-school in his native village, and at an early period was favoured with the visitations of divine love.

When ten years of age, he went out to daily labour as plough-boy, and continued in this employment for about seven years. During this time he was regular in his attendance at a place of worship; was a sober steady lad, and always brought home his wages to his sister, who still continued to manage for him. The individual for whom he drove the horses says, that he never heard him use a bad word, nor ever saw him give way to passion, although at times sorely tried.

At seventeen years of age he left his sister's care, and obtained a situation with a farmer in an adjoining hamlet of the same parish. Here, being strong and healthy, and having a good share of natural spirits, he often found it difficult to withstand the many temptations to which he was exposed; being often thrown into company where drinking, idle conversation, and various other follies were indulged in. At first these things were very trying to him; the witness for God in the secret of his heart showing them to be evil, and warning him to refrain; but not being sufficiently attentive to this faithful monitor, he began to take delight in these things. His master, finding him a lively cheerful companion, often took him with him to the neighbouring fairs and other places of amusement. On his return from these merry-makings, when alone, his distress of mind was at times so great, that he would come to the conclusion never to do the like again; but as there

resolutions were made merely in his own strength, they were again and again broken when temptation presented itself. But the Almighty still in mercy followed him, and his hand was at times heavy upon him for his many transgressions. He was thus at length fully convinced that the path of self-denial was the only one that led to peace; and being favoured to see the emptiness of worldly pleasures, and their insufficiency to produce happiness, his mind became increasingly turned to seek for those consolations which he now believed religion alone could afford. He turned, therefore, with full purpose of heart unto Him from whom all strength cometh; by whose gracious assistance he was enabled to break off from his sins, and more openly to take up his cross. He was, in consequence, often the subject of ridicule, and much tried by the taunts and jeers of his former companions, all which he bore with patience, though he often found it hard work, and, to use his own words, "I often found it necessary, many times in a day, to lift up my heart to God for strength to enable me to persevere."

Notwithstanding he felt such condemnation in his own heart on account of sin, he was considered to be an unusually steady young man. He was strictly honest, and his word, even from a child, could always be depended upon; but now he saw that if he wished to lay up for himself treasure in heaven, it was not enough to be a moral character, and to be honest between man and man, but that he must be honest and faithful to his God also. Thus his mind became increasingly open to see that religion was a deep and inward work, carried on between the soul of man and God, its Creator and Redeemer.

About this time, he one evening observed a number of people going to a lecture, and, hoping that he might receive some good, he thought he also would go. The text chosen on this occasion was from *Hosea*, vi. 1. "Come and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn and he will heal us: he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." He was particularly struck with the text itself, and the way in which it was treated tended greatly to the enlightening of his mind, as to the means of reconciliation between the guilty soul of man and an offended God, through the merits and mediation of a crucified Redeemer.

He returned home much distressed, and not wishing to have his feelings interrupted, instead of joining the rest of the family, he retired into a room by himself, and there, in deep prostration of soul, under a sense of his own unworthiness,

he besought the Lord so to carry on His work in his heart, that from that day forward, he might know a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness. Thus humbled and contrited before the Lord, he became effectually awakened to seek after enduring happiness, earnestly imploring that all within him might be brought into subjection to his holy will.

From this time, he became daily more and more acquainted with the inward operation of the Holy Spirit; and convinced that nothing short of an entire submission to its refining power, could ever destroy those strong propensities to evil with which he was so much tried; and which, at times, he feared he should never overcome. He was often much distressed, when reflecting on those things which appertain to the life which is to come, his mind being much occupied therewith when at work; and on his return home of an evening, he would frequently sit quite silent. At these times, the tears of tenderness were often seen running down his cheeks, which he would endeavour to conceal, lest he should appear to be what he was not, in respect to religious attainments; at other times, when much depressed, he would go into another room by himself, and there pour forth his secret prayers to the Almighty for help. It was also his frequent practice, at this time, to sit up great part of the night reading the Scriptures.

Thus was he brought to see the necessity, as well as privilege, of that state of mind which the apostle Paul speaks of, when he says, "Pray without ceasing." 1 *Thes.* v. 17. He perceived that something different from the outward expression of our wants to the Almighty in words, must be meant; something which could be exercised at all times, and which did not obstruct our outward employments; and thus gradually a state of watching unto prayer became, in some measure, habitual to him; and he was often favoured, when following the plough, or otherwise engaged in his daily occupation, to hold communion with his God, so that, as he has in effect often expressed himself, his labour seemed light; and, whilst his outward man was exhausted, his internal strength was renewed.

His conversation became uniformly of a serious cast, and he was remarkably diligent in attending public worship on all occasions when practicable; and having known, in his own experience, the sufficiency of the grace of God, he was at times brought under great exercise of mind on account of others; particularly some of his own near connexions, who, he feared, were living in a careless, unconcerned state; and

under these feelings, he would often affectionately entreat them to consider the awful situation in which they were standing, telling them what God had done for his soul, and inviting them, by those mercies he had witnessed, to come, taste, and see the goodness of the Lord.

He had now reached his twentieth year, and in the early part of 1819, he engaged with a farmer in a neighbouring parish (Melksham); here his occupation was that of ploughman or carter. His master soon discovered that he was a man of principle, and therefore placed great confidence in him; and since his death, he has informed the writer that he never had had a servant who always considered his interest so much as Charles. He was often out from home with the horses: on these occasions, he took money with him to pay turnpike and other expenses, and on his return, he always gave a remarkably correct account, having used as much care in the expenditure of it as if it had been his own. He was never in the habit of staying about unnecessarily at public houses, but, when the horses had had the necessary refreshment, he went on, and returned home as soon as possible.

In speaking of public houses, he has several times said, that he never could feel satisfied to go to them merely for the sake of drinking and smoking with a friend; for he was satisfied, that any one who thus voluntarily spent his time there, was sure to come away worse than he went. He said he had many times, when out with his master's horses, been obliged to spend an evening, and sleep at a public house; but not being there from choice, and endeavouring to be watchful, he hoped he had been preserved; although at such times he was often obliged to witness things of which he could not by any means approve, yet he had seldom felt himself at liberty openly to express his disapprobation; but he always endeavoured, by the solidity of his deportment, to show that he could by no means join with them, and then, if any one asked him the cause, he endeavoured, in as meek a way as possible, to point out how displeasing such conduct was in the Divine sight.

His conduct to the plough-boys and others who worked with him, was remarkably exemplary, and well worthy of imitation, showing the solicitude he felt for their best welfare. When any of the boys behaved amiss and vexed him, instead of swearing at or beating them, he would call them to him, and in a quiet, serious manner, ask them if they were aware that the Almighty could see them; that He knew all they

were doing, even their most secret thoughts ; and then he would tell them, how displeasing such conduct was to Him, —adding, that if he was to beat them ever so much, that would not satisfy the Almighty, but they must pray to Him to forgive them and help them to do better in future. Thus he would reason with them, till the starting tears often evidently showed that the witness for God in their youthful hearts was in a measure reached ; although at the time they often tried to make it appear that they did not care any thing about it, yet some of them have since acknowledged that they never forgot it ; and that the recollection of it often proved a check to them afterwards.

It was also his frequent practice, when the boys were cleaning the horses, &c. in the stable, instead of letting them spend their time in singing idle songs, or in useless, or, as is too often the case, vicious conversation, to amuse, and at the same time instruct them, by relating the history of Moses, Abraham, or any other scripture character,—taking care to point out to them the blessed effects of a life dedicated to the service of God, and the unhappy effects of the contrary ; indeed, it may be said, that on all occasions in which he took part in the conversation, it was his aim to give it an instructive tendency.

Having saved sufficient money to furnish a cottage comfortably, and have a few pounds left, he began to think of marrying. In mentioning the subject to a friend, he told her he thought his mind would be more settled, and he wished to choose that state of life in which he thought he could serve God best. The more he contemplated this interesting subject, the more important he saw it to be to make a right choice ; believing that not only his present, but also his everlasting happiness much depended on it. Under these feelings, he was often led in secret to pray to the Almighty, (who has promised, that if we acknowledge Him in all our ways, He will direct our paths,) to enable him to make choice of one who was also under the influence of religious principles, and who might, in things pertaining to salvation, prove a true helpmate to him. He took a small cottage at Littleton Wood, in the Parish of Semington, a village about two miles from Melksham, which he neatly furnished : he removed there to live, but still continued to work at the same farm, at which he had been employed for several years.

In 1823, he was married to Betty Smith, a young woman about his own age, who resided at Steeple Ashton, with whom he had been acquainted for some years.

The first twelve months had nearly passed away, when he was called upon to endure a severe trial in the loss of his first child, and the dangerous and lingering illness of his wife; but knowing where to look for help, he was supported under it, and enabled to feel resigned to the divine will. In a letter addressed to his sister, after speaking very feelingly of his wife's illness, and expressing a hope that, with care, she would still be spared to him, he says: "The little boy is dead, but God knows what is best for us: may he make us content with his will."

His wife gradually got better, but was not able to go out of the house for several months: during this time, he was remarkably kind and attentive to her. After his return home of an evening from the labours of the day, he was accustomed, as his wife sat at work, to read aloud a few chapters from the Bible, and then they generally conversed a little about what he had been reading. Before they retired to rest, it was his constant practice to endeavour to check all worldly thoughts, and to feel after a sense of the Lord's presence. He was also careful to examine his actions during the past day; and if he was sensible of having transgressed the righteous law of God, so to humble himself in his sight, as to be enabled to close his eyes under a sense of his forgiveness and love; and in the morning, he seldom left his room without attempting to lift up his heart to Him for preservation during the coming day. These seasons were frequently owned by the influence of divine love, strengthening and comforting him.

Towards the latter end of the year 1825, he had a serious illness, and was confined at home several weeks. A friend who visited him at this time, says of him, that though his illness was apparently dangerous, he did not appear to be agitated with fear, or deprived of hope, but there was an unusual degree of that solemnity of feeling so much to be desired.

He was naturally of a shy, retiring character; notwithstanding which, the concern he felt for the spiritual welfare of his neighbours, often led him to call on them, and try to stir them up to greater diligence; and for the young and rising generation, he was particularly desirous that they might, by an early dedication of their hearts to God, be preserved from the many snares that attend the slippery path of youth, and thereby be spared that pain and misery, which an indulgence in the vain pleasures of the world, is sure one day or other to cause them. He frequently spoke with great pleasure of those who, he believed, were walking in the path of

self-denial, and it was his delight to encourage them to persevere; but he was cautious, in so doing, not to encourage any undue dependence on man. He remarked, that he thought a growth in that which is good is often retarded by looking too much to our fellow-men for help, instead of depending more entirely on the teaching of the Holy Spirit, which we are promised shall teach us all things, and lead us into all truth; "I used," said he, "to be fond of running about to one and the other, but I hope I am got beyond that now." "The kingdom of God is within you," and there, he now felt from experience, it must be sought.

In 1827, he removed to reside at Semington. Here, being at a coal-pit on a very wet night, and having to wait long for the loading of his wagon, he wrapped himself up in his damp great-coat, and lay down to sleep on some hay.

The next evening, on his return home, he found he had taken a very violent cold; he continued to work, however, for several days, but at last became so ill that he was obliged to keep his bed. Hearing he was unwell, I called rather late in the evening to see him, and found him in a very alarming state, labouring under a severe attack of inflammation of the lungs; his breathing was very short and oppressed, and every attempt to speak produced violent attacks of coughing. Desiring he would not speak, I sat quietly on the side of the bed for a considerable time. I found that he was quite sensible of his danger, and from the peace and serenity which appeared in his countenance, doubted not but that he experienced that confidence in his Redeemer, which makes the true believer more than conqueror. Although no conversation took place, I was much gratified with my visit. I stayed till a late hour, and then took leave of him, hardly expecting that he would survive till the morning. The following evening, I visited him again, and was pleased to find that the disease had taken a favourable turn, and that there appeared considerable ground to hope for his recovery. I remarked, that when I left him the night before, I hardly expected to see him living at this time. He answered, "No, sir, I did not expect it myself, but the Lord knows what is best for us." I said, "seeing thou wast fully aware of thy situation, how didst thou feel in the prospect of death?" He looked up very pleasantly, and said, "very peaceful and quiet—it did not take me by surprise; this is not the first time I have thought of dying. I have been endeavouring to prepare for such a time as this for some years past." The cough coming on, I requested he would not attempt to talk again, but after a little pause, he

said, "O! how good the Lord is; there is a support in religion when every thing else fails; and I believe if it should please the Lord to release me, there is a place of rest prepared for my immortal soul; but it is all in mercy, nothing of my own; I have nothing to trust to but the mercy of God in Christ Jesus."

During the whole of this illness, his mind was preserved in a remarkably quiet, peaceful state, and a person who was with him most of the time, remarked that she never saw him show any sign of impatience, or heard a murmuring word escape from him. Indeed it was quite a privilege to sit an hour by his bedside, particularly when he was well enough to converse.

He gradually improved, but as his bodily strength increased, his gracious Lord saw meet to prove him with poverty of spirit. He said to a person who called, "The enemy knows when we are weak; he has been very busy with me for some days past, but he has not been suffered to prevail; 'tis hard work at such times to keep our minds stayed upon the Lord." It was his practice, when thus tried, instead of struggling with the temptation, or wasting time in bemoaning his situation, to turn at once in simple faith to God for help, by which means he often experienced, that "the name of the Lord is a strong tower, to which the righteous flee and are safe." *Prov. xviii. 10.* Thus he did on the present occasion, so that he was soon favoured with a return of that evenness of spirits, for which he was so peculiarly remarkable. His strength rapidly increased, and after being confined at home about a month, he resumed his usual employment.

Calling to see him one evening, I found he was gone to Steeple Ashton, and had taken his eldest daughter with him. After I had been sitting some time conversing with his wife, he came in, appearing remarkably solid and thoughtful. His wife remarked to him, that she had been favoured with very comfortable feelings since he had been gone, and hoped he had had a pleasant walk; he replied, "the Lord has appeared to me in a wonderful manner; I never had such feelings in my life as I have had to-night coming home, and it is not gone now; if you will sit down and be quiet, I will try to tell you." After a short pause, he continued: "As I was walking along, with the little girl in my arms, being much depressed both in body and mind, I was endeavouring to look to the Lord for help under our present trials. After awhile, I found my mind brought into such a quiet, peaceful state, and I felt such a sense of the love and goodness of God, that

I could not go on, but sat down on a heap of stones by the side of the road. I remained there some time before I was able to move; my feelings quite overcame me, and the tears of joy ran down my cheeks. Then I looked up, and the moon was shining so bright, that every thing seemed peaceful and quiet about me, and I felt such liberty to beg of the Lord that he would enable us to persevere in the right way, and give us strength to bear up under all our trials, and when it should please him to take us out of this troublesome world, that he would in mercy grant us an admittance into his glorious kingdom. Then I looked at the little maid as she lay in my lap, and I felt my mind drawn out in such desires for her, that as she grew in stature, she might grow in the grace and favour of God. My mind was so full of the love of God, that I could not help praying for the whole human race, that all might be brought to a sense of their situation, and sincerely repent before it was too late. After awhile, I got up and walked quietly home, but O! the peace and calm that I felt! I never felt such nearness to the Lord before: there seemed nothing between my soul and Him. I think nothing can ever make me doubt the mercy and goodness of God towards the vilest sinner living." After relating the above, he sat silent a considerable time, and seemed fearful of entering much into conversation, lest he should dissipate the feelings with which he had been favoured, and which he said in some measure still remained.

Being a man of few words, he was little known, even among his nearest neighbours; many of whom, for want of a better knowledge of his real character, considered him rather dull and stupid.

He was very cautious not to enter into free conversation on religious subjects, unless he felt his mind in some degree prepared for it; knowing that "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." *Prov. xvi. 1*. He said he believed many persons suffered great loss from expressing their feelings so freely, without waiting to know more of this preparation, by which alone their conversation could be truly edifying and instructive to others, or satisfactory to themselves.

For the last few months there appeared an increased degree of watchfulness in all his actions, and quickened attention to his religious duties; from his remarks, it was obvious that his views of the inward and spiritual nature of true religion were much deepened.

About this time, he was affected with a pain in the nerves

of his cheek, which appeared to be something of the *Tic douloureux*; the pain was at times very violent, particularly at night, so that he frequently got very little or no sleep: this continued for several months; various means were used, but with little success: he bore it very patiently, knowing that the Lord doth not afflict willingly, but that all our trials, if rightly borne, would lead to our purification, and in the end perhaps prove our greatest blessings. He was much weakened by the violence of the pain and loss of sleep, and at times felt discouraged, fearing that he should be obliged to give up his work and apply to the parish for assistance.

I called one evening, and sat some time with him. On inquiring for his health, he replied that he still suffered a good deal from pain in his face, but the Lord was very good to him, and he thought he had never spent such a day in his life, or at least when at work, as he had done that day; that his mind had been so clothed with good during the whole of the time, that his labour appeared nothing to him, although he had been occupied nearly twelve hours, pitching and loading bean sheaves, during which he and his companion had conversed but little, lest they should dissipate the precious feeling with which they were favoured.

On the 23d, I called again, and sat some time with him. He informed me that he had slept nearly the whole of the previous night, and had been free from pain all day; which he had not been able to say for a long time past. He was very cheerful, and several times expressed his thankfulness for his present blessings. I took my leave, little supposing it was the last time I should ever see him at his own house.

He had been employed for several days past in carrying timber from Monks, near Corsham, to Semington; and on the 25th, he went again for that purpose: having carefully loaded the carriage, he was returning homewards, when coming down a narrow and rather steep road, one of the pieces of timber slipping forward, disabled the off-wheel horse, and threw the whole weight on the other, which, being more than he was equal to bear, forced the carriage onwards, and Charles, in his anxiety to prevent the horses from being injured, was crushed between the carriage and a wall, by which he was dreadfully bruised, having his right shoulder dislocated, the bone behind much fractured, five or six ribs on the right, and one on the left side broken, and the whole region of the chest appeared to have been violently pressed inwards; he was also very much bruised and cut in various parts of the face and body. In this state he was carried to

the Asylum at Corsham, about a mile distant, where every kind attention was paid him by the superintendent and his wife, and proper medical assistance procured.

The accident happened about three o'clock in the afternoon, and, about seven, his wife, and several others who felt interested about him, came to him. His sufferings, which were extreme, he was enabled to bear with a wonderful degree of patience and resignation. Speaking gave him much pain, but as he himself expressed it, he felt such a sense of the love and goodness of God, that he could at times hardly help giving vent to his feelings. It being remarked to him that his bodily sufferings must be very great, he replied: Yes, my pain is very great, but O! what a mercy it is that my senses are so clear, and that my mind is kept so quiet and peaceful, for even at the very moment when I was crushed between the carriage and the wall, (although I had not been thinking of good things before,) I felt such a sense of the presence of God, and that all that was then happening was with his knowledge and permission, that all anxiety as to how it might end seemed taken from me. I felt satisfied that His hand was with me, and that, if He pleased, He could spare my life, but if He saw right to take it, I believed it would be in mercy to my poor soul." At various times, during his short illness, he alluded to his feelings at this time, saying, "O! how merciful the Lord is to me, for from the time I was first taken, He has never left me, nor suffered my faith to be shaken; the enemy has not been permitted for a moment to rob me of my peace, or cause a single doubt to arise in my mind." At another time, alluding to the same, he said, "My confidence in the mercy of God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is so strong, and has been through the whole of this illness, that if all the devils in hell were to try to rob me of my peace, they could not do it."

The pain and difficulty of breathing were at times so great, that it appeared hardly likely he would survive through the night; but towards morning, he was so much relieved as to be able to bear being moved, in order to make the bed more comfortable. A person coming in, and finding him apparently much better, remarked that he could not help indulging some faint hope of his recovery; he said, "Do you think so, sir?" and then, after a short pause, added, "Well, if it be the will of God, I must endeavour to be resigned to it, but I hope I shall never leave this bed alive: I would much rather depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

He several times requested to be left quite alone for a short

time, in order that his mind might be entirely abstracted from all outward objects, and stayed wholly upon God, so that nothing might interrupt or obstruct that inward communion of soul with the Most High, which was now his only support, and of which he was in a large degree favoured to partake. At times, when his sufferings were very acute, he would get a little restless; but in the midst of it, he would say, "Now, let us try to be quiet a little;" he would then lie perfectly still, sometimes fifteen or twenty minutes at a time, and in silence wait to feel his spiritual strength renewed; afterwards, he would break forth in some remarkably sweet expression, as the following: "Oh! what a merciful God we have to do with! He never fails those who look to Him in sincerity for help. He knows what I suffer in my poor body; O! the sweet peace that I feel! were it not for that, how could I bear it?"

At another time, he said, "I have often heard those lines,

' Jesus can make a dying bed,
 Feel soft as downy pillows are :
 While on his breast I lean my head,
 And breathe my life out sweetly there.'

But O! the difference between hearing it and feeling it! now I feel it, O! the peace and happiness that I feel, I cannot possibly express it; through faith in my dear Redeemer, I can now say, 'I am thine and thou art mine.'

One afternoon, seeing his wife much distressed, he said, "Don't distress yourself, Betsy; I shall soon be where all pain and sorrow shall cease: we have not been long together, but we have enjoyed much happiness, and had many precious seasons. We have had many trials, but the Lord has raised us up friends, and helped us through. It will not be long before we shall meet again, to spend a happy and never-ending eternity together; and you must remember that there is still a God who has promised to be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless; and I believe you will not be forsaken."

He frequently spoke, without the least emotion, of his death, and on one of these occasions, he said, "I should like people to know how happy I died; not that it will do me any good, but perhaps it might encourage others, to give up more entirely to serve the Lord."

To a person who was sitting by him, he said, "Notwithstanding the blessed assurance which I now feel of everlasting happiness, yet I am sensible, that had I been more atten-

live to the inward manifestations of the Spirit of Christ in my heart, I might have made much greater advances in the spiritual life than I have done; but I have fallen very far short of what the Lord would have had me to be, had I been more obedient to that internal Teacher; for as you read the other night, "He is indeed all-sufficient, and is ever waiting to do us good." Frequently, after lying still for some time, apparently engaged in mental supplication, he would exclaim, "O! happy! happy!" On one of these occasions, his wife remarked to him, that she hoped he did not build on anything of his own. He replied, "No, nothing but Christ." He said nothing more at that time, but the following day, looking at her very pleasantly, he said, "Betsy, you had your doubts and fears about me yesterday, had not you?" She replied, that she had no evidence against him, but as there were many ways of deceiving ourselves, she thought it would be a satisfaction to her, to hear from his own lips, on what foundation he was building. He then said, in a solemn manner, "On the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, the Rock of Ages—I have had such sweet communion with him in spirit, and he has given me faith to believe, all will be well."—Through the whole of his short but deeply trying illness, he was preserved in a wonderful degree of patience and resignation; never being once heard to complain, even when suffering the most excruciating pain; and his mind seemed remarkably divested of every burden.

Several of his fellow-servants, and others of his acquaintance, came to see him the afternoon previous to his death; to whom, although much reduced, he was enabled to hand some weighty advice and counsel. To one of them, he said, "O! what a mercy it is that the Lord has drawn your heart to seek him in your youth; when you are brought into the situation I am in, you will not think that you began too soon, or gave up too much to serve him. O! it is a blessed thing to give our prime to the Lord." To another, he said, "Mind your never-dying soul, and do not let earthly cares have too much place; it is high time to awake out of sleep, and lead a different life; you will find it an awful situation to be brought on a death-bed! Oh, prepare for death!"

In the evening, he lay for several hours in great agony; and suffering much from oppressed and laborious breathing, he said, "If this continues, I cannot hold it long." His wife said, "I hope, my dear, you feel your mind stayed on the Lord, and that there is a crown of glory laid up for you." "Yes," he replied, "yes, I feel the Lord very near me; but

I cannot talk now." He then lay perfectly still, with his eyes steadfastly fixed upwards, apparently earnestly engaged in mental supplication. His breathing now became so much oppressed, that his friends were standing around the bed in almost momentary expectation of his dissolution. On a person asking him a question, he requested that he might not be disturbed, still keeping his eyes steadfastly fixed on one point, a sweet smile at times playing over his dying features. In about twenty minutes, he revived a little, and looked round on those about him. The heavenly expression of his countenance at this time, exhibiting so much peace and joy, was very impressive, and scarcely to be conceived by those who were not present on this deeply interesting and instructive occasion. It is not in the power of words to express the solemnity of this scene.

He then said, in an unusually loud, clear voice, which had for several hours previously been almost inaudible, from extreme pain and weakness : " I believe I am about to enter an awful eternity, but through the mercy of my dear Redeemer, I am not afraid to die, for I feel that that God whom I have endeavoured to serve, is now supporting me ; what else could support me in this trying hour ! The pain of the body is great, almost more than I can bear ; but it sinks into nothing when I look at the crown of glory which my dear Saviour has prepared for me. I have not been following a cunningly devised fable ; no ! I now find it a real support to me. I shall soon be where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary soul shall be forever at rest.

Shall soon resign this fleeting breath,
And die, my father's God to meet.

Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and if it be Thy will, take me to Thyself."

He was then quite exhausted, and lay sometime gasping for breath, till at length it appeared as if he had almost ceased to breathe. His wife then knelt down by the side of the bed, and her feelings so far overpowered her, that she sobbed aloud several times ; she was requested to try to restrain her feelings, as she would disturb her husband : she said, " He knows what I am about ; it won't disturb him. I am wrestling with my God for the spirit of prayer, to enable me to take the bitterest cup He ever gave me to drink." Just at this time, he turned his head on that side, and with the same heavenly smile still on his countenance, which was preserved during the whole time he was speaking, he added ; " Though I walk

through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God—He—giveth me the—vic—tory,—through—our—Lord—Jesus—Christ.”

The last few words were spoken at intervals, and in so low a voice as to be scarcely audible. He lay perfectly still for a considerable time, when, contrary to expectation, he so far recovered as to be able to speak, in a low whisper, without much difficulty.

For several hours previous to his death, he was at times a little rambling, but still, as often as returning recollection enabled him, he expressed his joy and his confidence in the Saviour.

He quietly resigned his breath to Him who gave it, about 12 o'clock on the night of the 29th, being four days from the time the accident happened; and his remains were interred at Steeple Ashton, his native village, on the 3d of the Ninth month, 1829. He had not yet attained his thirtieth year.

THE END.

OATHS;
THEIR MORAL CHARACTER
AND EFFECTS.

EXTRACTED FROM

"ESSAYS ON THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY," &c.

By JONATHAN DYMOND.



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OATHS, THEIR MORAL CHARACTER, &c.

AN Oath is that whereby we call God to witness the truth of what we say, with a Curse upon ourselves, either implied or expressed, should it prove false.*

Supposing the Christian scriptures to contain no information respecting the moral character of oaths, how far is it reasonable, or prudent, or reverent, for a man to stake his salvation upon the truth of what he says? To bring forward so tremendous an event as "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," in attestation of the offence perhaps of a poacher, or of the claim to a field, is surely to make unwarrantably light of most awful things. This consideration applies, even if a man is sure that he speaks the truth: but who is, beforehand, sure of this? Oaths in evidence, for example, are taken before the testimony is given. A person swears that he will speak the truth. Who, I ask, is sure that he will do this? Who is sure that the embarrassment of a public examination, that the ensnaring questions of counsel, that the secret influence of inclination or interest, will not occasion him to utter one inaccurate expression? Who, at any rate, is so sure of this, that it is rational, or justifiable, specifically to stake his salvation upon his accuracy? Thousands of honest men have been mistaken; their allegations have been sincere, but untrue. And if this should be thought not a legitimate objection, let it be remembered, that few men's minds are so sternly upright, that they can answer a variety of questions upon subjects on which their feelings, and wishes, and interest are involved, without some little deduction from the truth, in speaking of matters that are against their cause, or some little overcolouring of facts in their own favour. It is a circumstance of constant occurrence, that even a well-intentioned witness adds to or deducts a little from the truth. Who then, amidst such temptation, would make, who ought to make, his hope of heaven dependent on his strict adherence to accurate veracity? And if such considerations indicate the impropriety of swearing upon subjects which affect the lives,

* Milton: Christian Doctrine, p. 579.

and liberties, and property of others, how shall we estimate the impropriety of using these dreadful imprecations to attest the delivery of a summons for a debt of half a crown!

These are moral objections to the use of oaths independently of any reference to the direct moral law. Another objection of the same kind is this: To take an oath is to assume that the Deity will become a party in the case,—that we can call upon Him, when we please, to follow up, by the exercise of His almighty power, the contracts (often the very insignificant contracts) which men make with men. Is it not irreverent, and for that reason immoral, to call upon Him to exercise this power in reference to subjects which are so insignificant that other men will scarcely listen with patience to their details?

Upon every subject of questionable rectitude that is sanctioned by habit and the usages of society, a person should place himself in the independent situation of an inquirer. He should not seek for arguments to defend an existing practice, but should simply inquire what our practice ought to be. One of the most powerful causes of the slow amendment of public institutions, consists in this circumstance, that most men endeavour rather to justify what exists than to consider whether it ought to exist or not. This cause operates upon the question of oaths. We therefore invite the reader, in considering the citation which follows, to suppose himself to be one of the listeners at the mount,—to know nothing of the customs of the present day, and to have no *desire* to justify them.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I say unto you, Swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be yea yea, nay nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.”*

If a person should take a New Testament, and read these words to ten intelligent Asiatics who had never heard of them before, does any man believe that a single individual of them would think that the words did not prohibit *all* oaths? I lay stress upon this consideration: if ten unbiassed persons would, at the first hearing, say the prohibition was universal, we have no contemptible argument that that is the real meaning of the words. For to whom were the words addressed? Not

to schoolmen, of whom it was known that they would make nice distinctions and curious investigations; not to men of learning, who were in the habit of cautiously weighing the import of words;—but to a multitude,—a mixed and unschooled multitude. It was to such persons that the prohibition was addressed; it was to such apprehensions that its form was adapted.

“It hath been said of old time, Thou shalt *not forswear* thyself.” Why refer to what was said of old time? For this reason assuredly; to point out, that the present requisitions were *different* from the former; that what was prohibited now, was *different* from what was prohibited before. And what was prohibited before? Swearing *falsely*,—Swearing and *not performing*. What then could be prohibited now? Swearing *truly*,—Swearing, even, and *performing*: that is, swearing at all; for it is manifest that if truth may not be attested by an oath, no oath may be taken. Of old time it was said, “Ye shall not swear by my name *falsely*.”* “If a man swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not *break* his word.”† There could be no intelligible purpose in contradicting the new precept from these, but to point out a characteristic difference; and there is no intelligible characteristic difference but that which denounces all oaths. Such were the views of the early Christians. “The old law,” says one of them, “is satisfied with the honest *keeping* of the oath, but Christ cuts off the *opportunity* of perjury.”‡ In acknowledging that this prefatory reference to the former law, is in my view absolutely conclusive of our Christian duty, I would remark, as an extraordinary circumstance, that Dr. Paley, in citing the passage, omits this introduction and takes no notice of it in his argument.

“I say unto you, Swear *not at all*.” The words are absolute and exclusive.

“Neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by Jerusalem, nor by thy own head.” Respecting this enumeration it is said that it prohibits swearing by certain objects, but not by all objects. To which a sufficient answer is found in the parallel passage in James: “Swear not,” he says, “neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by *any other* oath.”§ This mode of prohibition, by which an absolute and universal rule is first proposed and then followed by certain *examples* of the prohibited things, is elsewhere employed in Scripture. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image; or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above; or that is in the earth beneath; or

* Lev. xix. 12.

† Numb. xxx. 2.

‡ Basil.

§ Jas. v. 12.

that is in the water under the earth.”* No man supposes that this after-enumeration was designed to restrict the obligation of the law,—Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Yet it were as reasonable to say that it was lawful to make idols in the form of imaginary monsters, because they were not mentioned in the enumeration, as that it is lawful to swear any given kind of oath because it is not mentioned in the enumeration. Upon this part of the prohibition it is curious that two contradictory opinions are advanced by the defenders of oaths. The first class of reasoners says, The prohibition allows us to swear by the Deity, but disallows swearing by inferior things. The second class says, The prohibition allows swearing by inferior things, but disallows swearing by the Deity. Of the first class is Milton. The injunction, he says, “does not prohibit us from swearing by the name of God,—we are only commanded not to swear by heaven, &c.”† But here again the Scripture itself furnishes a conclusive answer. It asserts that to swear by heaven *is to swear by the Deity*: “He that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and *by Him* that sitteth thereon.”‡ To prohibit swearing by heaven, is therefore to prohibit swearing by God.—Amongst the second class is Dr. Paley. He says, “On account of the relation which these things [the heavens, the earth, &c.] bore to the Supreme Being, to swear by any of them was in effect and substance to swear by *Him*; for which reason our Saviour says, Swear not at all; that is, neither directly by God, nor indirectly by any thing related to Him.”§ But if we are thus prohibited from swearing by any thing related to Him, how happens it that Paley proceeds to justify judicial oaths? Does not the judicial deponent swear by something related to God? Does he not swear by something much more nearly related than the earth or our own heads? Is not our hope of salvation more nearly related than a member of our bodies?—But after he has thus taken pains to show that swearing by the Almighty was especially forbidden, he enforces his general argument by saying, that Christ *did* swear by the Almighty! He says that the high priest examined our Saviour upon oath, “by the living God;” which oath he took. This is wonderful; and the more wonderful, because of these two arguments, the one immediately follows the other. It is contended, within half a dozen lines, first, that Christ forbade swearing by God, and next, that He violated his own command.

“But let your communication be yea yea, nay nay.” This

* Exod. xx. 3. See also, xx. 4. † Christ. Doct. p. 582. ‡ Matt. xxiii. 22.
§ Mor. & Pol. Phil. b. 3, p. 1, c. 16.

is remarkable : it is positive superadded to negative commands. We are told not only what we ought not, but what we ought to do. It has indeed been said that the expression "your communication," fixes the meaning to apply to the ordinary intercourse of life. But to this there is a fatal objection : the whole prohibition *sets out* with a reference not to conversational language but to solemn declarations on solemn occasions. Oaths, Oaths "to the Lord," are placed at the head of the passage ; and it is too manifest to be insisted upon, that solemn declarations, and not every-day talk, were the subject of the prohibition.

"Whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil." This is indeed most accurately true. Evil is the foundation of oaths : it is because men are bad that it is supposed oaths are needed : take away the wickedness of mankind, and we shall still have occasion for No and Yes, but we shall need nothing "more than these." And this consideration furnishes a distinct motive to a good man to decline to swear. To take an oath is tacitly to acknowledge that this "evil" exists in his own mind, —that with him Christianity has not effected its destined objects.

From this investigation of the passage, it appears manifest that all swearing upon all occasions is prohibited. Yet the ordinary opinion, or rather, perhaps, the ordinary defence is, that the passage has no reference to judicial oaths.—"We explain our Saviour's words to relate not to judicial oaths, but to the practice of vain, wanton, and unauthorized swearing in common discourse." To this we have just seen that there is one conclusive answer : our Saviour distinctly and specifically mentions, as the subject of his instructions, *solemn oaths*. But there is another conclusive answer even upon our opponents' own showing. They say, first, that Christ described particular forms of oaths which might be employed, and next, that his precepts referred to wanton swearing ;—that is to say, that Christ described what particular forms of wanton swearing he allowed and what he disallowed ! You cannot avoid this monstrous conclusion. If Christ spoke only of vain and wanton swearing, and if he described the modes that were lawful, he sanctioned wanton swearing provided we swear in the prescribed form.

With such distinctness of evidence as to the universality of the prohibition of oaths by Jesus Christ, it is not in strictness necessary to refer to those passages in the New Testament which some persons adduce in favour of their employment. If Christ have prohibited them, nothing else can prove them to be right. Our reference to these passages will accordingly be short.

"I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." To those who allege that Christ, in answering to this "Thou hast said," took an oath, a sufficient answer has already been intimated. If Christ then took an oath, he swore by the Deity, and this is precisely the very kind of oath which it is acknowledged he himself forbade. But what imaginable reason could there be for examining him upon oath? Who ever heard of calling upon a prisoner to *swear* that he was guilty? Nothing was wanted but a simple declaration that he was the Son of God. With this view, the proceeding was extremely natural. Finding that, to the less urgent solicitation he made no reply, the high priest proceeded to the more urgent. Schleusner expressly remarks upon the passage, that the words, I adjure, do not here mean "I make to swear or put upon oath," but, "I solemnly and in the name of God exhort and enjoin." This is evidently the natural, and the only natural meaning; just as it was the natural meaning when the evil spirit said, "I adjure thee by the living God that thou torment me not." The evil spirit surely did not administer an oath.

"God is my witness that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers."* That the Almighty was witness to the subject of his prayers, is most true; but to state this truth is not to swear. Neither this language nor that which is indicated below, contains the characteristics of an oath according to the definitions even of those who urge the expressions. None of them contain, according to Milton's definition, "a curse upon ourselves;" nor according to Paley's, an "invocation of God's vengeance." Similar language, but in a more emphatic form, is employed in writing to the Corinthian converts. It appears from 2 Cor. ii, that Paul had resolved not again to go to Corinth in heaviness, lest he should make them sorry. And to assure them *why* he had made this resolution, he says, "I call God for a record upon my soul that *to spare you* I came not as yet unto Corinth." In order to show this to be an oath, it will be necessary to show that the apostle imprecated the vengeance of God if he did not *keep* the truth. Who can show this?—The expression appears to me to be only an emphatical mode of saying, God is witness; or as the expression is sometimes employed in the present day, God knows that such was my endeavour or desire.

The next and the last argument is of a very exceptionable class: it is founded upon silence. "For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of

* Rom. i. 9. See also 1 Thess. ii. 5. and Gal. i. 20.

all strife.”* Respecting this it is said that it “speaks of the custom of swearing judicially without any mark of censure or disapprobation.” Will it then be contended that whatever an apostle mentions without reprobating, he approves? The same apostle speaks just in the same manner of the pagan games; of running a race for prizes and of “striving for the mastery.” Yet who would admit the argument, that *because* Paul did not then censure the games, he thought them right? The existing customs both of swearing and of the games, are adduced merely by way of *illustration* of the writer’s subject.

Respecting the lawfulness of oaths then, as determined by the Christian Scriptures, how does the balance of evidence stand? On the one side, we have plain emphatical prohibitions,—prohibitions of which the distinctness is more fully proved the more they are investigated: on the other we have—counter precepts? No—It is not even pretended: but we have examples of the use of language of which it is saying much to say, that it is *doubtful* whether they are oaths or not. How then would the man of reason and of philosophy decide? —“Many of the Christian fathers,” says Grotius, “condemned *all* oaths without exception.”† Grotius was himself an advocate of oaths. “I say nothing of perjury,” says Tertullian, “since *swearing itself* is unlawful to Christians.”‡ Chrysostom says, “Do not say to me, I swear for a just purpose: it is no longer lawful for thee to swear either justly or unjustly.”§ “He who,” says Gregory of Nysse, “has precluded murder by taking away anger, and who has driven away the pollution of adultery by subduing desire, has expelled from our life the curse of perjury by forbidding us to swear; for where there is no oath there can be no infringement of it.”|| Such is the conviction which the language of Christ conveyed to the early converts to his pure religion; and such is the conviction which I think it would convey to us, if custom had not familiarized us with the evil, and if we did not read the New Testament rather to find justifications of our practice, than to discover the truth and to apply it to our conduct.

INEFFICACY OF OATHS.

Of the influence of legal penalties in binding to veracity, little needs to be said. It is obvious that if they induce men to refrain from theft and violence, they will induce men to refrain from perjury. Jurymen swear that they will give a verdict according to the evidence, and yet it is perfectly well known that

* Heb. vi. 16. † Rights of War and Peace.

‡ De Idol. cap. 11.

§ In Gen. ii. Hom. xv.

|| In Cant. Hom. 13

they often assent to a verdict which they believe to be contrary to that evidence. They do not all coincide in the verdict which the foreman pronounces; it is indeed often impossible that they should coincide. This perjury is committed by multitudes; yet what juryman cares for it, or refuses, in consequence of his oath, to deliver a verdict which he believes to be improper? The reason that they do not care, is, that the oath, as such, does not bind their consciences. It stands alone. The public do not often reprobate the violation of such oaths; the law does not punish it; jurymen learn to think that it is no harm to violate them; and the resulting conclusion is, that the form of an oath cannot and does not supply the deficiency;—it cannot and does not apply the religious sanction.

Step a few yards from the jury-box to the witness-box, and you see the difference. There public opinion interposes its power—there the punishment of perjury impends—there the religious sanction is applied—and there, consequently, men regard the truth. If the simple intervention of an oath was that which bound men to veracity, they would be bound in the jury-box as much as at ten feet off: but it is not.

To take an oath in voluntary ignorance of the obligations which it is intended to impose, and to excuse ourselves for disregarding them because we do not know what they are, cannot surely be right. Yet it is often difficult, sometimes impossible, to discover what an oath requires. The absence of precision in the meaning of terms, the alteration of general usages whilst the forms of oaths remain the same, and the original want of explicitness of the forms themselves, throw sometimes insuperable obstacles in the way of discovering, when a man takes an oath, what it is that he binds himself to do.

“The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, touching the matter in question.” Is the witness to understand by this that if he truly answers all questions that are put to him, he conforms to the requisitions of the oath? If he is, the terms of the oath are very exceptionable, for many a witness may give true answers to a counsel, and yet not tell “the whole truth.” Or does the oath bind him to give an exact narrative of every particular connected with the matter in question, whether asked or not? If it does, multitudes commit perjury. How then shall a witness act? Shall he commit perjury by withholding all information but that which is asked? Or shall he be ridiculed and perhaps silenced in court for attempting to narrate all that he has sworn to disclose? Here again the morality of the people is injuriously affected. To take an oath to do a certain prescribed act, and then to do only just that which

custom happens to prescribe, is to ensnare the conscience and practically to diminish the sanctions of veracity. The evil may be avoided either by disusing all previous promises to speak the truth or to adapt the terms of the promise (if that can be done) to the duties which the law or which custom expects. "You shall true answer make to all such questions as shall be asked of you," is the form when a person is sworn upon a *voir dire*; and if this is all that the law expects when he is giving evidence, why not use the same form? If, however, in deference to the reasonings against the use of any oaths, the oath in evidence were abolished, no difficulty could remain: for to *promise* in any form to speak the truth, is, as we have seen, absurd.

Whilst the oath in evidence continues to be imposed, it is not an easy task to determine in what sense the witness should understand it. If you decide by the meaning of the legislature which imposed the oath, it appears manifest that he should tell all he knows, whether asked or not. But what, it may be asked, is the meaning of a law, but that which the authorized expounders of the law determine? And if they habitually admit an interpretation at variance with the terms of the oath, is not their sanction an authoritative explanation of the legislature's meaning? These are questions which I pretend not with confidence to determine. The mischiefs which result from the uncertainty are to be charged upon the legislatures which do not remove the evil. I would, however, suggest that the meaning of a form in such cases is to be sought, not so much in the meaning of the original imposers, as in that of those who now sanction the form by permitting it to exist. This doubtless opens wide the door to extreme licentiousness of interpretation. Nor can that door be closed. There is no other remedial measure than an alteration of the forms or an abolition of the oath.

THE EFFECTS OF OATHS.

There is a power and efficacy in our religion which elevates those who heartily accept it above that low moral state in which alone an oath can even be supposed to be of advantage. It is the testimony even of infidelity, that "wherever men of uncommon energy and dignity of mind have existed, they have felt the degradation of binding their assertions with an oath."* This degradation, this descent from the proper ground on which a man of integrity should stand, illustrates the proposition that whatever exceeds affirmation "cometh of evil." The evil origin is so palpable that you cannot comply with the custom without feeling that you sacrifice the dignity of virtue. It is related of Solon that

he said "A good man ought to be in that estimation that he needs not an oath; because it is to be reputed a lessening of his honour if he be forced to swear."* If to take an oath, lessened a pagan's honour, what must be its effect upon a Christian's purity?

Oaths, at least the system of oaths which obtains in this country, tends powerfully to deprave the moral character. We have seen that they are continually violated,—that men are continually referring to the most tremendous sanctions of religion with the habitual belief that those sanctions impose no practical obligation. Can this have any other tendency than to diminish the influence of religious sanctions upon other things? If a man sets light by the divine vengeance in a jury-box to-day, is he likely to give full weight to that vengeance before a magistrate to-morrow? We cannot prevent the effects of habit. Such things will infallibly deteriorate the moral character, because they infallibly diminish the power of those principles upon which the moral character is founded.

Oaths encourage falsehood. The effect of instituting oaths is to diminish the practical obligation of simple affirmation. The law says, You must speak the truth when you are upon your oath; which is the same thing as to say that it is less harm to violate truth when you are not on your oath. The court sometimes reminds a witness that he is upon oath, which is equivalent to saying, If you were not, we should think less of your mendacity. The same lesson is inculcated by the assignation of penalties to perjury and not to falsehood. What is a man to conclude, but that the law thinks light of the crime which it does not punish; and that since he may lie with impunity, it is not much harm to lie? Common language bears testimony to the effect. The vulgar phrase, I will take my oath to it, clearly evinces the prevalent notion that a man may lie with less guilt when he does not take his oath. No answer can be made to this remark, unless any one can show that the extra sanction of an oath is so much added to the obligation which would otherwise attach to simple affirmation. And who can show this? Experience proves the contrary: "Experience bears ample testimony to the fact, that the prevalence of oaths among men (Christians not excepted) has produced a very material and very general effect in reducing their estimate of the obligation of plain truth, in its natural and simple forms."†—"There is no cause of insincerity, prevarication, and falsehood, more powerful, than the practice of administering oaths in a court of justice."‡

Upon this subject the legislator plays a desperate game

against the morality of a people. He wishes to make them speak the truth, when they undertake an office or deliver evidence. Even supposing him to succeed, what is the cost? That of diminishing the motives to veracity in all the affairs of life. A man may not be called upon to take an oath above two or three times in his life, but he is called upon to speak the truth every day.

A few, but a few serious, words remain. The investigations of this chapter are not matters to employ speculation, but to influence our practice. If it be indeed true that Jesus Christ has imperatively forbidden us to employ an oath, a duty, an imperative duty, is imposed upon us. It is worse than merely vain to hear his laws unless we obey them. Of him, therefore, who is assured of the prohibition, it is indispensably required that he should refuse an oath. There is no other means of maintaining our allegiance to God. Our pretensions to Christianity are at stake: for he who, knowing the Christian law, will not conform to it, is certainly not a Christian. How then does it happen, that although persons frequently acknowledge they think oaths are forbidden, so few, when they are called upon to swear, decline to do it? Alas! this offers one evidence amongst the many, of the want of uncompromising moral principles in the world,—of such principles as it has been the endeavour of these pages to enforce,—of such principles as would prompt us and enable us to sacrifice *every* thing to Christian fidelity. By what means do the persons of whom we speak suppose that the will of God respecting oaths is to be effected? To whose practice do they look for an exemplification of the Christian standard? Do they await some miracle by which the whole world shall be convinced, and oaths shall be abolished without the agency of man? Such are not the means by which it is the pleasure of the Universal Lord to act. He effects his moral purposes by the instrumentality of faithful men. Where are these faithful men?—But let it be: if those who are called to this fidelity refuse, theirs will be the dishonour and the offence. But the work will eventually be done. Other and better men will assuredly arise to acquire the Christian honour and to receive the Christian reward

THE
RIGHTS
OF
SELF-DEFENCE.

BY
JONATHAN DYMOND.



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THE RIGHTS OF SELF-DEFENCE.

THE right of defending ourselves against violence is easily deducible from the law of nature. There is, however, little need to deduce it, because mankind are at least *sufficiently* persuaded of its lawfulness. The great question which the opinions and principles that now influence the world make it needful to discuss is, whether the right of self-defence is absolute and unconditional,—Whether every action whatever is lawful, provided it is necessary to the preservation of life? They who maintain the affirmative maintain a great deal; for they maintain that whenever life is endangered, all rules of morality are, as it respects the individual, suspended, annihilated: every moral obligation is taken away by the single fact that life is threatened.

Yet the language that is ordinarily held upon the subject implies the supposition of all this. “If our lives are threatened with assassination or open violence from the hands of robbers or enemies, *any* means of defence would be allowed and laudable.”* Again: “There is one case in which *all* extremities are justifiable, namely, when our life is assaulted and it becomes necessary for our preservation to kill the assailant.”†

The reader may the more willingly inquire whether these propositions are true, because most of those who lay them down are at little pains to *prove* their truth. Men are extremely willing to acquiesce in it without proof, and writers and speakers think it unnecessary to adduce it. Thus perhaps it happens that fallacy is not detected because it is not sought.—If the reader should think that some of the instances which follow are remote from the ordinary affairs of life, he is requested to remember that we are discussing the soundness of an alleged *absolute rule*. If it be found that there are or have been cases in which it is not absolute,—cases in which *all* extremities are not lawful in defence of life,—then the rule is not sound: then there are some limits to the right of self-defence.

If “*any* means of defence are laudable,” if “*all* extremities are justifiable,” then they are not confined to acts of resistance to the assailing party. There may be other conditions upon which life may be preserved than that of violence towards *him*. Some ruffians seize a man in the highway, and will kill him unless he will conduct them to his neighbour’s property and assist them in carry-

* Grotius: Rights of War and Peace.

† Paley: Mor. and Pol. Phil. p. 3, b. 4, c. 1.

ing it off. May this man unite with them in the robbery in order to save his life, or may he not? If he may, what becomes of the law, Thou shalt not steal? If he may not, then *not every means* by which a man may preserve his life is "laudable" or "allowed." We have found an exception to the rule. There are twenty other wicked things which violent men may make the sole condition of not taking our lives. Do all wicked things become lawful because life is at stake? If they do, morality surely is at an end: if they do not, such propositions as those of Grotius and Paley are untrue.

A pagan has unalterably resolved to offer me up in sacrifice on the morrow, unless I will acknowledge the Deity of his gods and worship them. I shall presume that the Christian will regard these acts as being, under every possible circumstance, unlawful. The night offers me an opportunity of assassinating him. Now I am placed, so far as the argument is concerned, in precisely the same situation with respect to this man, as a traveller is with respect to a ruffian with a pistol. Life in both cases depends on killing the offender. Both are acts of self-defence. Am I at liberty to assassinate this man? The heart of the Christian surely answers, No. Here then is a case in which I may not take a violent man's life in order to save my own.—We have said that the heart of the Christian answers, No: and this, we think, is a just species of appeal. But if any one doubts whether the assassination would be unlawful, let him consider whether one of the Christian apostles would have committed it in such a case. Here, at any rate, the heart of every man answers, No. And mark the reason,—because every man perceives that the act would have been palpably inconsistent with the apostolic character and conduct; or, which is the same thing, with a *Christian* character and conduct.

Or put such a case in a somewhat different form. A furious Turk holds a scimitar over my head, and declares he will instantly dispatch me unless I abjure Christianity and acknowledge the divine legation of "the Prophet." Now there are two supposable ways in which I may save my life; one by contriving to stab the Turk, and one "by denying Christ before men." You say I am not at liberty to deny Christ, but I am at liberty to stab the man. *Why* am I not at liberty to deny Him? Because Christianity forbids it. Then we require you to show that Christianity does *not* forbid you to take his life. Our religion pronounces both actions to be wrong. You say that under these circumstances the *killing* is right. Where is your proof? What is the ground of your distinction? But, whether it can be adduced or not, our immediate argument is established.—That there are *some* things which it is not lawful to do in order to preserve our lives. This conclusion has indeed been practically acted upon. A company of inquisitors and their agents are about to conduct a good man to the stake. If he could by any means destroy these men, he might save his life.—It is a question therefore of self-defence. Supposing these means to be within his power,—supposing he could contrive a mine, and by suddenly firing it, blow his persecutors into the air,—would it be lawful and Christian thus

to act? No. The common judgments of mankind respecting the right temper and conduct of the martyr pronounce it to be wrong. It is pronounced to be wrong by the language and example of the first teachers of Christianity. The conclusion therefore again is, that all extremities are *not* allowable in order to preserve life;—that *there is a limit to the right of self-defence.*

It would be to no purpose to say that in some of the instances which have been proposed, *religious* duties interfere with and limit the rights of self-defence. This is a common fallacy; religious duties and moral duties are identical in point of obligation, for they are imposed by one authority. Religious duties are not obligatory for any other reason than that which attaches to moral duties also; namely, the will of God. He who violates the moral law is as truly unfaithful in his allegiance to God, as he who denies Christ before men. So that we come at last to one single and simple question, whether taking the life of a person who threatens ours is or is not compatible with the moral law. We refer for an answer to the broad principles of Christian piety and Christian benevolence; that piety which reposes habitual confidence in the Divine Providence, and an habitual preference of futurity to the present time; and that benevolence which not only loves our neighbours as ourselves, but feels that the Samaritan or the *enemy* is a neighbour. There is no conjuncture in life in which the exercise of this benevolence may be suspended; none in which we are not required to maintain and to practise it. Whether want implores our compassion, or ingratitude returns ill for our kindness; whether a fellow-creature is drowning in a river or assailing us on the highway; everywhere, and under all circumstances, the duty remains.

Is killing an assailant, then, *within* or *without* the limits of this benevolence?—As to the man, it is evident that no good-will is exercised towards him by shooting him through the head. Who indeed will dispute that, before we can destroy him, benevolence towards him must be excluded from our minds? We not only exercise no benevolence ourselves, but preclude him from receiving it from any human heart: and, which is a serious item in the account, we cut him off from all possibility of reformation. To call sinners to repentance was one of the great characteristics of the mission of Christ. Does it appear consistent with this characteristic for one of his followers to take away from a sinner the power of repentance? Is it an act that accords, and is congruous, with Christian love?

But an argument has been attempted here. That we may "kill the assailant is evident in a state of nature, unless it can be shown that we are bound to prefer the aggressor's life to our own; that is to say, to love our enemy *better* than ourselves, which can never be a debt of justice nor anywhere appears to be a duty of charity."* The answer is this: That although we may not be required to love our enemy *better* than ourselves, we are required to love him *as* ourselves; and therefore, in the supposed case, it would still be a question equally balanced which life ought to be sacrificed; for it

is quite clear that if we kill the assailant, we love him *less* than ourselves, which does seem to militate against a duty of charity. But the truth is, that he who, from motives of obedience to the will of God, spares the aggressor's life even to the endangering his own, does exercise love both to the aggressor and to himself, *perfectly*: to the aggressor, because by sparing his life we give him the opportunity of repentance and amendment: to himself, because every act of obedience to God is perfect benevolence towards ourselves; it is consulting and promoting our most valuable interests; it is propitiating the favour of Him who is emphatically "a rich rewarder."—So that the question remains as before, not whether we should love our enemy better than ourselves, but whether Christian principles are acted upon in destroying him; and if they are not, whether we should prefer Christianity to ourselves; whether we should be willing to lose our life for Christ's sake and the gospel's.

Perhaps it will be said that we should exercise benevolence to the public as well as to the offender, and that we may exercise more benevolence to them by killing than by sparing him. But very few persons, when they kill a man who attacks them, kill him out of benevolence to the public. That is not the motive which influences their conduct, or which they at all take into the account. Besides, it is by no means certain that the public would lose any thing by the forbearance. To be sure, a man can do no more mischief after he is killed; but then it is to be remembered, that robbers are more desperate and more murderous from the apprehension of swords and pistols than they would be without it. Men are desperate in proportion to their apprehensions of danger. The plunderer, who feels a confidence that his own life will not be taken, may conduct his plunder with comparative gentleness; while he who knows that his life is in immediate jeopardy stuns or murders his victim lest he should be killed himself. The *great* evil which a family sustains by a robbery is often not the loss, but the terror and the danger; and these are the evils which, by the exercise of forbearance, would be diminished. So that if some bad men are prevented from committing robberies by the fear of death, the public gains in other ways by the forbearance: nor is it by any means certain that the balance of advantages is in favour of the more violent course.—The argument which we are opposing proceeds on the supposition that our own lives are endangered. Now it is a fact that this very danger results, in part, from the want of habits of forbearance. We publicly profess that we would kill an assailant; and the assailant, knowing this, prepares to kill us when otherwise he would forbear.

And, after all, if it were granted that a person is at liberty to take an assailant's life, *in order to preserve his own*, how is he to know, in the majority of instances, whether his own would be taken? When a man breaks into a person's house, and this person, as soon as he comes up with the robber, takes out a pistol and shoots him, we are not to be told that this man was killed "in defence of life." Or, go a step further, and a step further still, by which the intention of the robber to commit personal violence or inflict death is

more and more probable: you must at last shoot him in uncertainty, whether your life was endangered or not. Besides, you can withdraw,—you can fly. None but the predetermined murderer *wishes* to commit murder. But, perhaps, you exclaim, “Fly! Fly, and leave your property unprotected!” Yes,—unless you mean to say that preservation of property, as well as preservation of life, makes it lawful to kill an offender. This were to adopt a new and a very different proposition; but a proposition which I suspect cannot be separated in practice from the former. He who affirms that he may kill another in order to preserve his life, and that he may endanger his life in order to protect his property, does, in reality, affirm that he may kill another in order to preserve his property. But such a proposition, in an unconditional form, no one surely will tolerate. The laws of the land do not admit it, nor do they even admit the right of taking another’s life simply because he is attempting to take ours. They require that we should be tender even of the murderer’s life, and that we should fly rather than destroy it.*

We say that the proposition that we may take life in order to preserve our property is intolerable. To preserve how much? five hundred pounds, or fifty, or ten, or a shilling, or a sixpence? It has actually been declared that the rights of self-defence “justify a man in taking all forcible methods which are necessary in order to procure the restitution of the freedom or the property of which he had been unjustly deprived.”† All forcible methods to obtain restitution of property! No limit to the nature or effects of the force! No limit to the insignificance of the amount of the property! Apply, then, the rule. A boy snatches a bunch of grapes from a fruiterer’s stall. The fruiterer runs after the thief, but finds that he is too light of foot to be overtaken. Moreover the boy eats as he runs. “All forcible methods,” reasons the fruiterer, “are justifiable to obtain restitution of property. I may fire after the plunderer, and when he falls, regain my grapes.” All this is just and right, if Gisborne’s proposition is true. It is a dangerous thing to lay down maxims in morality.

The conclusion then to which we are led by these inquiries is, that he who kills another, even upon the plea of self-defence, does not do it in the predominance nor in the exercise of Christian dispositions; and if this is true, is it not also true that his life cannot be thus taken in conformity with the Christian law?

But this is very far from concluding that no resistance may be made to aggression. We may make, and we ought to make, a great deal. It is the duty of the civil magistrate to repress the violence of one man towards another, and by consequence it is the duty of the individual, when the civil power cannot operate, to endeavour to repress it himself. I perceive no reasonable exception to the rule,—that whatever Christianity permits the magistrate to do in order to restrain violence, it permits the individual, under such circumstances, to do also.

Many kinds of resistance to aggression come strictly within the

* Blackstone: Com. v. 4, c. 4.

† Gisborne: Moral Philosophy.

fulfilment of the law of benevolence. He who by securing or temporarily disabling a man prevents him from committing an act of great turpitude, is certainly his benefactor; and if he be thus reserved for justice, the benevolence is great both to him and to the public. It is an act of much kindness to a bad man to secure him for the penalties of the law: or it *would be* such if penal law were in the state in which it ought to be, and to which it appears to be making some approaches. It would then be very probable that the man would be reformed; and this is the greatest benefit which can be conferred upon him and upon the community.

The exercise of Christian forbearance towards violent men is not tantamount to an invitation of outrage. Cowardice is one thing; this forbearance is another. The man of true forbearance is of all men the least cowardly. It requires courage in a greater degree and of a higher order to practise it when life is threatened, than to draw a sword or fire a pistol.—No: It is the peculiar privilege of Christian virtue to approve itself even to the bad. There is something in the nature of that calmness, and self-possession, and forbearance, that religion effects, which obtains, nay which almost commands, regard and respect. How different the effect upon the violent tenants of Newgate—the hardihood of a turnkey and the mild courage of an Elizabeth Fry! Experience, incontestable experience, has proved that the minds of few men are so depraved or desperate as to prevent them from being *influenced* by real Christian conduct. Let him therefore who advocates the taking the life of an aggressor, first show that all other means of safety are vain; let him show that bad men, notwithstanding the exercise of true Christian forbearance, persist in their purposes of death:—when he has done this he will have adduced an argument in favour of taking their lives which will not, indeed, be conclusive, but which will approach nearer to conclusiveness than any that has yet been adduced.

Of the consequences of forbearance, even in the case of personal attack, there are some examples. Archbishop Sharpe was assaulted by a footpad on the highway, who presented a pistol and demanded his money. The archbishop spoke to the robber in the language of a fellow-man and of a Christian. The man was really in distress, and the prelate gave him such money as he had, and promised that if he would call at the palace, he would make up the amount to fifty pounds. This was the sum of which the robber had said he stood in the utmost need. The man called and received the money. About a year and a half afterward, this man again came to the palace and brought back the same sum. He said that his circumstances had become improved, and that, through the “astonishing goodness” of the archbishop, he had become “the most penitent, the most grateful, and the happiest of his species.”—Let the reader consider how different the archbishop’s feelings were, from what they would have been if, by his hand, this man had been cut off.*

Barclay, the apologist, was attacked by a highwayman. He sub-

* See Lond. Chron Aug. 12, 1785. See also Life of Granville Sharpe, Esq. p. 13

substituted for the ordinary modes of resistance a calm expostulation. The felon dropped his presented pistol, and offered no further violence. A Leonard Fell was similarly attacked, and from him the robber took both his money and his horse, and then threatened to blow out his brains. Fell solemnly spoke to the man on the wickedness of his life. The robber was astonished: he had expected, perhaps, curses, or perhaps a dagger. He declared he would not keep either the horse or the money, and returned both. "If thine enemy hunger, *feed him*; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head."*—The tenor of the short narrative that follows is somewhat different. Ellwood, who is known to the literary world as the suggester to Milton of *Paradise Regained*, was attending his father in his coach. Two men waylaid them in the dark and stopped the carriage. Young Ellwood got out, and on going up to the nearest, the ruffian raised a heavy club, "when," says Ellwood, "I whipped out my rapier and made a pass upon him. I could not have failed running him through up to the hilt," but the sudden appearance of the bright blade terrified the man so that he stepped aside, avoided the thrust, and both he and the other fled. "At that time," proceeds Ellwood, "and for a good while after, I had no regret upon my mind for what I had done." This was while he was young, and when the forbearing principles of Christianity had little influence upon him. But afterward, when this influence became powerful, "a sort of horror," he says, "seized on me when I considered how near I had been to the staining of my hands with human blood. And whosoever afterward I went that way, and indeed as often since as the matter has come into my remembrance, my soul has blessed Him who preserved and withheld me from shedding man's blood."†

That those over whom, as over Ellwood, the influence of Christianity is imperfect and weak, should think themselves at liberty upon such occasions to take the lives of their fellow-men, needs to be no subject of wonder. Christianity, if we would rightly estimate its obligations, must be felt in the heart. They in whose hearts it is not felt, or felt but little, cannot be expected perfectly to know what its obligations are. I know not therefore that more appropriate advice can be given to him who contends for the lawfulness of taking another man's life in order to save his own, than that he would first inquire whether the influence of religion is dominant in his mind. If it is not, let him suspend his decision until he has attained to the fullness of the stature of a Christian man. Then, as he will be of that number who *do* the will of Heaven, he may hope to "know, of this doctrine, whether it be of God."

* *Select Anecdotes, &c.* by John Barclay.

† *Ellwood's Life.*